

2014-536-2966

Ph. D. Degree Thesis

**SHAHU CHHATRAPATI OF KOLHAPUR : A SOCIAL REVOLUTIONARY
1874-1922**

2966

Submitted by

M. D. NALWADE M. A; LL. B.
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History

in fulfilment of the requirements of the
Shivaji University Kolhapur.

GUIDE

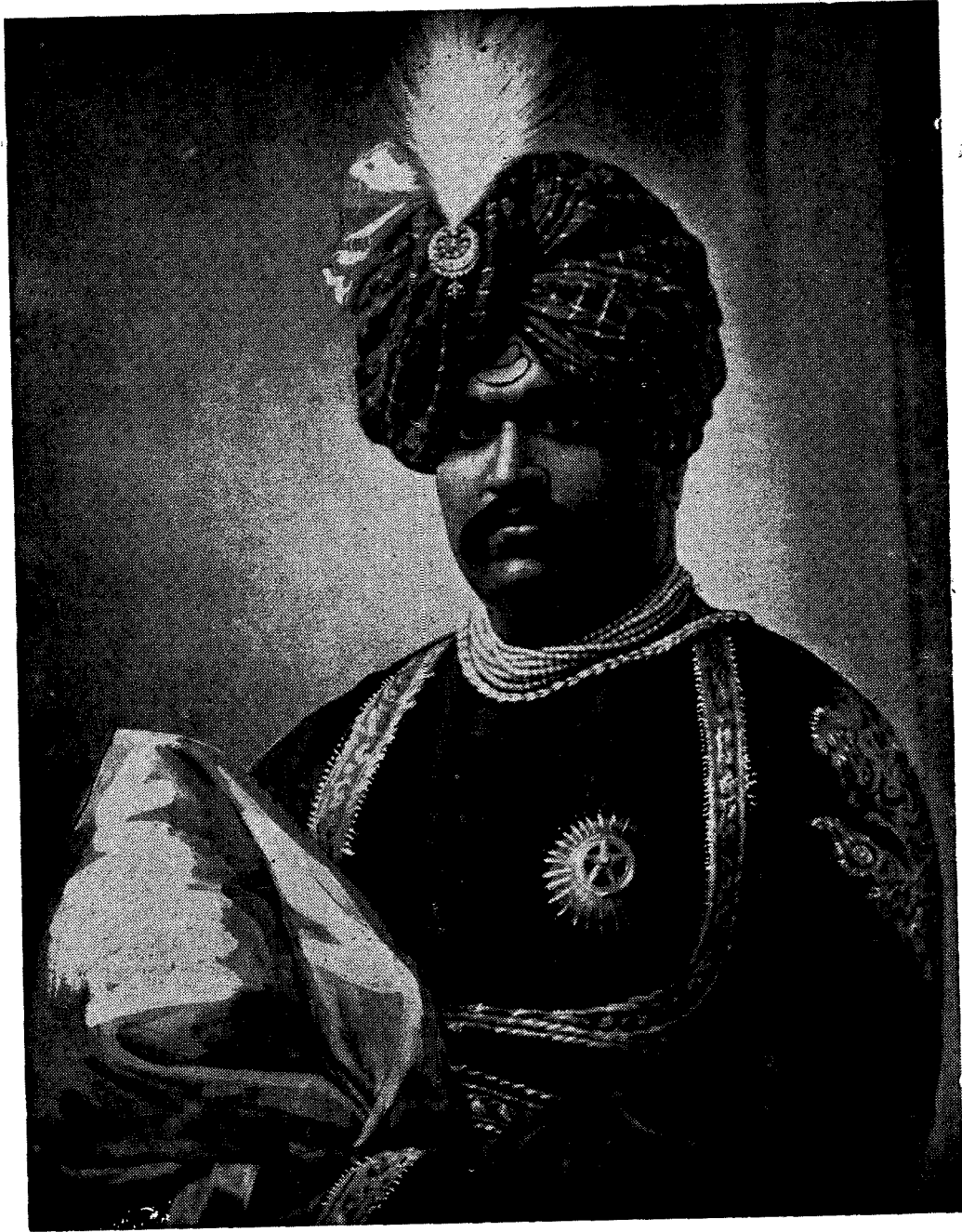
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DECEMBER 1978

SHIVAJI UNIVERSITY, KOLHAPUR (MAHARASHTRA) INDIA

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D E C L A R A T I O N

I, M. D. Nalawade hereby declare
that this thesis has been written
by me and submitted to the Shivaji
University, Kolhapur for the Degree
of Doctor of Philosophy in History.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'M. D. Nalawade', is written in a cursive style.

(M. D. Nalawade)

SHAHU CHHATRAPATI OF KOLHAPUR : A SOCIAL REVOLUTIONARY

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CRONOLOGY

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- : P R E F A C E : -

This dissertation, "Shahu Chhatrapati of Kolhapur - A Social Revolutionary" is an attempt to study the life and achievements of Shahu Chhatrapati as the king and leader of Kolhapur State. Since the assumption of power in 1894 A.D. to his death in 1922 A.D., Shahu had ruled and guided the people of Kolhapur. The people of Maharashtra, specially, other than the Brahmins were also attracted towards his career. Though, the 19th century social reforms were much fascinating, the death of Justice M.G.Ranade in 1901, caused a sort of dejection in the higher castes of the Hindus. Shahu, the supporter of the commoners and Lokmanya, the political revolutionary were clashed together on issue of social reforms, in Maharashtra. What was Shahu's role during all those times ? Was he first the king or reformer ? What exactly he wanted to achieve ? To know these problems rather in that perspective, it was necessary to analyse the whole career of Shahu Chhatrapati. The subject is thus very important from various points of view. Almost all the people belonging to different castes and religions in Maharashtra, still look upon the career of Shahu as a guide line to them and hold him their hero. In one of his letters to Shahu, Dr.B.R.Ambedkar, the architect of Indian Constitution had called Shahu Maharaja as "father of the movement heading

towards social democracy in Modern India".¹ It was really a problem that "how could a king desire social democracy when he himself was a king?" Out of this curiosity, so also to know such an important subject related to the life of the whole of Maharashtra, I have studied the topic as a researcher in history.

To facilitate this study one requires the knowledge of the background of the social change that Maharashtra and the whole nation of ours witnessed in the 19th century. Similarly without knowing history of Kolhapur, the achievements of Shahu, whatsoever they might have been, would not be properly understood. It is with these views in mind, the first chapter and the first part of the second chapter are dealt with. In a native State of a Hindu king, especially in the time of the British, the two important agencies - the bureaucrats consisted of the Europeans and the natives and the Brahmins who dominated the society from the ancient times, played very decisive role in executing the orders of a native king. The third Chapter, therefore, [as being the basic difficulty of a king,] is named as "Dealing with the Bureaucrats and Brahmins". The Fourth is about Administrative Reforms and Administration in Kolhapur.

Chapter V and VI are dealt with Shahu's social work, reforms, and thoughts, allowing the last one for evaluating

1. KAO., SDR, No.13420 dated 4th Sept.1921.

the whole career of Shahu Chhatrapati as a Social Revolutionary.

The topic is important as well as still alive in the minds of Marathi people. Even though, there is much muddling over the issue of Brahmin non-Brahmin disputes, nobody till this day worked on this topic in a systematic and analytical way.

It is actually digging deep into the old documents of the historical importance. Many of them, for the first time are used in Chapter IV. The task was heavy and difficult. But because of the proper guide lines and directives given by Dr.G.B.Deglurkar, my guide, all problems are overcome. I really, owe my thanks to him. I also express my gratitude to Dr.N.H.Kulkarni, Deputy Director, National Archives of India, New Delhi, Shri A.C.Tikekar, Deputy Librarian of the Bombay University, Shri Katti, from the Library of the Marathawada University, Aurangabad, Shri Tamhane, Superintendent at the Kolhapur Archives Office, Shri M.G.Golvaikar, Librarian of the Rajaram College, Kolhapur, and Shri S.N.Jadhao from the Library of Shivaji University, Kolhapur for their ready help in my work. My thanks are also due to Prof. V.S.Kadam, Shri S.S. Desai, Director of Research section from my department, Shri Ramesh Dhavare, Research Fellow in Marathi Department and Shri P.A.Gavali, my ex-student and Research Fellow in History who have been good enough to assist me whenever I needed their help.

10th December, 1978

M.D.NALWADE

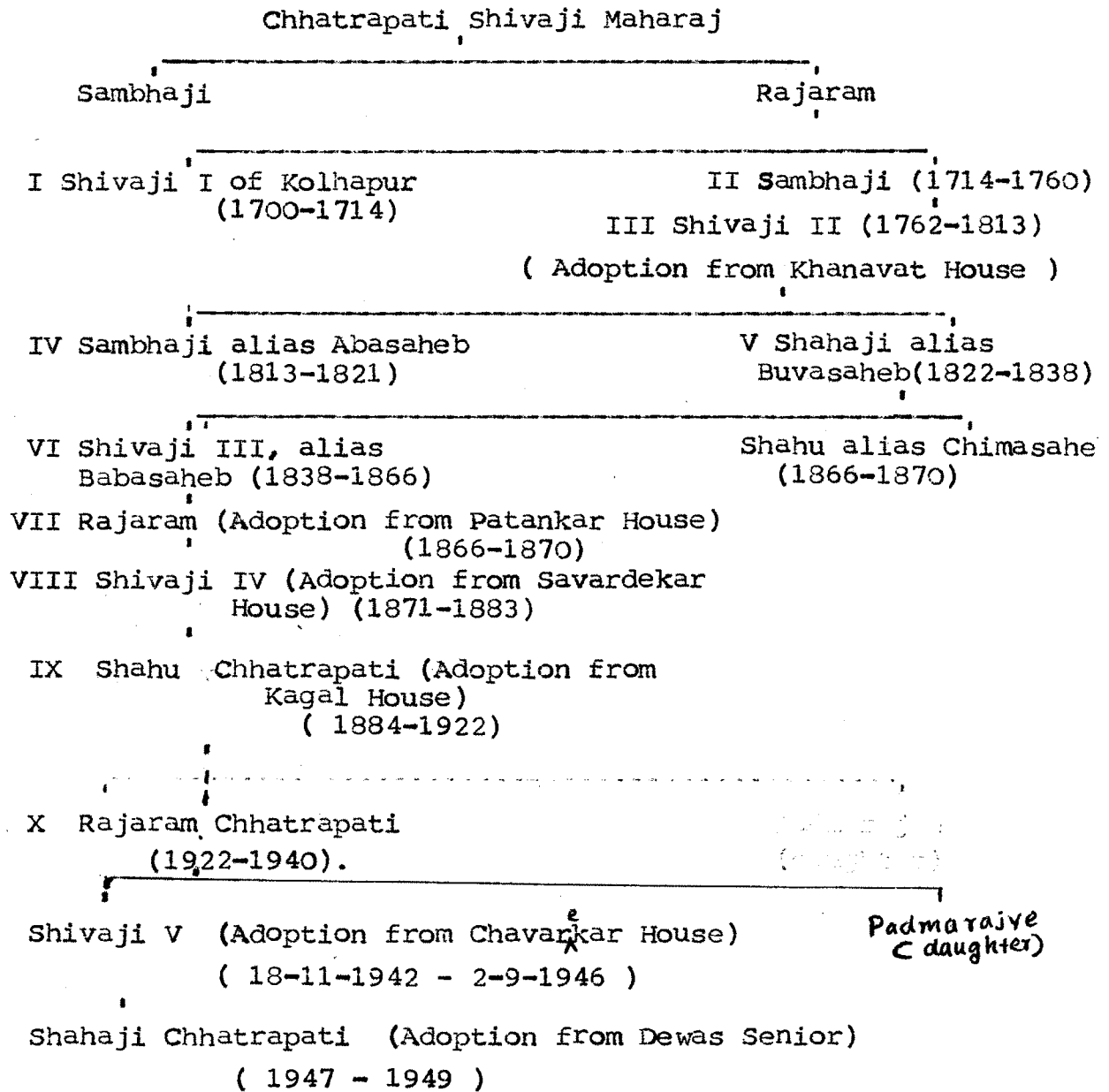
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THE ROYAL SEAL OF SHAHU CHHATRAPATI *

॥ श्री महादेव ॥
॥ श्री तुळजा भवानी ॥ चंद्रलेख वर्धोष्ण ॥
॥ जनार्दन प्रदायीनी ॥ शाहू छत्रपती राजमुद्रा ॥
शिवसुनो विराजयते

* The Royal Seal which was specially carved out at Shahu Chhatrapatis' Assumption of Power speaks out for his benevolent, progressive and prosperous rule. see —
Satham,D.N., - Adhunik Bhagirath - Rajarshi Shahu P.71
(From Vichare Daptar)

GENEALOGY OF THE KOLHAPUR CHHATRAPATIS

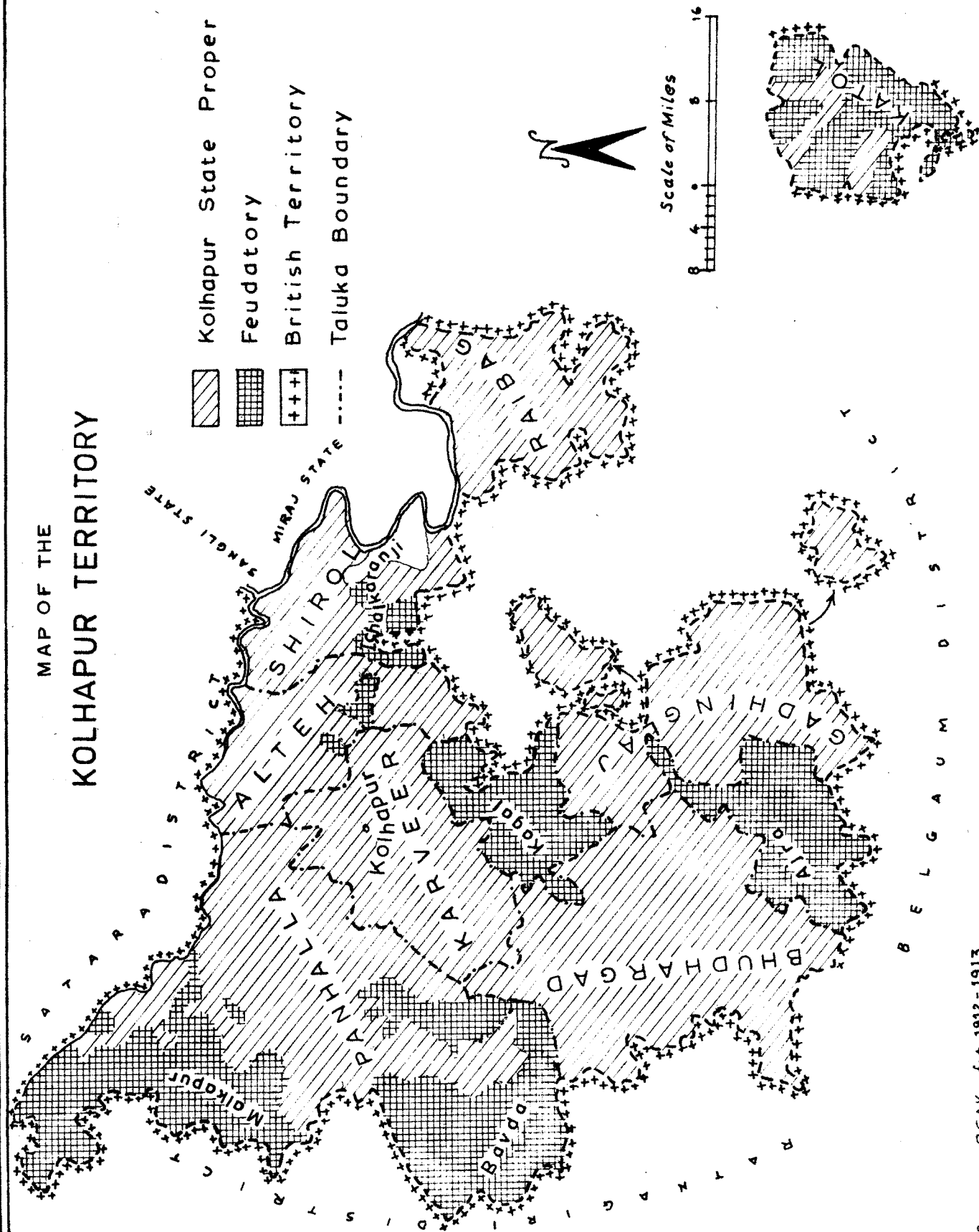


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Source : Dongare, M.G., Ed.: Bhosale Kulache Vamsha Vriksha.

MAP OF THE

KOLHAPUR TERRITORY



Source - RGAK, for 1912-1913

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE REFERENCES

BCB	:	Bhosale, Chavan and Bandivadekar
NAI	:	The National Archives of India New Delhi
HHSSM	:	Memoriors of His Highness Shri Shahu Chhatrapati Maharaja of Kolhapur
KAO	:	KOLHAPUR ARCHIVES OFFICE
KSG	:	KOLHAPUR STATE GAZATTE
RGAK	:	Report on the General Administration of Kolhapur
SDR	:	SHAHU Daptar Rumal

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CHAPTER ONE

THE TIMES BEFORE SHAHU'S RISE

Introduction : Shahu Chhatrapati of Kolhapur ruled the Kolhapur State from A.D. 1894 to 1922. After all he was a king and most of his time had been spent essentially for carrying out the State duties. In a Hindu State no ruler carried out his administration without seeking guidance and advice from the Brahmins. Traditions and precedents tell that the Brahmins were not only the masters of Hinduism, but were the controllers and supervisors of a State also. In this context, the progressive State policies, the Enactments and benevolent State activities of Shahu seemed unprecedented to them. Naturally, grudge of the Brahmins, then was likely to be increased against him. To add to the intensity of the Brahmin's illwill Shahu also turned to be in his individual life, a leader of the people other than the Brahmins. Questions arise then as - Did he, as an heir to the House of Shivaji Chhatrapati, do his duties in the perspective which demanded of him ? Or did he ignore the principles of a welfare State that Chhatrapati Shivaji established ?

The days, however, in the time of Shahu were changed. The age of Science and modernity was dawned. A wise ruler like him in those circumstances could go no longer unnoticed of the

changing times. For a king in a native State, it was necessary to change the whole tone of his administration and not to follow the footsteps of his predecessors. Cry for liberty, equality and fraternity, prevailed during that period over the houses and huts of those who desired to reunite their brotherly relations as human beings. A king who held his origin from the masses, certainly then, was to do all possible in his power for redressing the lots and setting up of a new way of progress and brotherhood.

A king in India, Brahmin or non-Brahmin, was never meant to bring change in the Hindu fold of life. No king nor a reformer in India was allowed by the social life of the Hindus to disrespect and disown the old heritage of the conservative mode of the Hindus. It is necessary, therefore, before going through the life and work of Shahu, to know in brief the form of Hinduism, new phases of awakening and the aspirations of the changing man. Without having the background of the changing world, various currents and cross currents in the social life of Maharashtra, no one will be able to understand Shahu's work and his efforts in creating atmosphere for an egalitarian society.

HINDUISM

Hinduism is the ancient religion of India and is practiced since the early days by the majority of people of the country. The extraordinary and unique feature of Hinduism is

this that its whole structure is based on the Chaturvarnya, that is, the four main divisions of the Hindus as the Brahmins, the Kshatriyas, the Vaishyas and the Shudras. These are again divided into numerous sub-castes and sects of each one. The principle applied for this division is of graded ~~inequality~~. In a way the whole structure of the caste system as Dr. B.R. Ambedkar had pointed out "forms an ascending scale of reverence and a descending scale of contempt."¹ To add to the degradation of mankind, the Hindu scriptures granted an invariable religious authority to the Brahmins to act as the heads of religion and master of the Hindus other than the Brahmin Varna.

To make the things worst and increase the hardships of the people other than the Brahmins, the "Hindu social structure" was refused to be challenged."² And it is an irony that the tragedies and misfortunes that the Hindus bore to this day because of internal caste strifes lay in this Chaturvarnya.³

The social order prescribed by the Purush Sukta has never been questioned by anyone except Buddha.⁴ And only Buddhism and Jainism in the ancient times could come to protect and safeguard the interests of the people other than the Brahmins.

1. Ambedkar, B.R., - The Presidential Address at the A.I.D.C.C. of Nagpur, 1930, p.3.

2. Prasad, Narmadeshwar - The Myth of the Caste System, p.I.

3. Although the scholars including Dr. Ambedkar refused to admit the authenticity of the Purush Sukta, Rig Veda, Book X, hymn 90, verses 11-12 which propounds the theory of Chaturvarnya, all the Hindus live the life as stated in the Chaturvarnya.

4. Ambedkar, B.R., - Who were the Shudras ? p. 4.

In the course of time, Buddha and his Dhamma did successfully accept the challenge of the caste system that was posed in the ancient times. Buddha the great naturally by way of preaching the sublime principles of his Dhamma got hold of the masses. Mahavira also succeeded to influence the masses for giving up Hinduism. Buddhist and Jain literature rightly so gave stress for setting away the Superhuman theory of Brahminism and tried to prove that Kshatriyas were not only superior but high caste also than the Brahmins.⁵ The exponents and leaders, both of the Buddhism and Jainism were the Kshatriyas and uphold the reformative form of life and opposed the Brahmins. It is thus we find the history of ancient India as a complex phase of struggle between the orthodox policy of the Brahmins and the heterodox and revolutionary policy of the Kshatriyas.

It is, however, true that some of the truly learned Brahmins were the first who favoured and accepted the principles of human equality and became first the disciples of Buddha.⁶ But the hardcore Brahmins did continue their struggle instead of contending with the principles of human equality. To maintain their unchallengable position in the society, they then dethroned the Sisunagas of Magadha. The Nandas, the illegitimate offsprings of the Sisunagas were then coronated by them to play a foul game against the Kshatriyas and their ideology of fraternity. The

5. Prasad, Narmadeshwar, - Op.cit., p. 41.

6. The first five disciples of Buddha were the Brahmin ascetics by names Kondanya, Bhaddhiya, Vappa, Mahanama and Assaji.

Mauryans were also defeated and destroyed by the same method and Pushymitra, the Brahmin hero was made king. Thus with the downfall of the Mauryas and Pushyamitras coming into power, "for the first time in the history of India, the Brahmins came to rule over a vast area."⁷ Here in this period, Manu's Manav Dharma-shastra was composed. And Manu Smriti's hatred against the Shudras and the Buddhist was made unbounded.⁸

Then about the time, when the Mohammedans were grabbing the western parts of India, the Brahmins and their various principalities in the east, especially the Sens of Bengal were engaged to force the Buddhists for renouncing their religion and accepting the Hindu fold. The Buddhist's Palas of Bengal, due to this only, became again the Hindus. Even in the Western Punjab, Brahminical influence was much larger and therein the Verma followed also the same course to force the Buddhists. Accordingly, as Narmadeshwar Prasad pointed out "Under the Brahminical rule, the people had no choice but to renounce Buddhism and accept the Varnashram rule."⁹

AFTER COMING OF THE MUSLIMS

After the beginning of the Sultanate power in India, the Buddhist although in small number, and the Kshatriyas and their Kings, had to fight on two different fronts at a time, the first one against the Muslim political influence and the other

7. Prasad, Narmadeshwar, - Op.cit., p. 45.

8. Ibid., Op.cit., p. 45.

9. Ibid., p. 84.

against the Brahminical domination over the Hindus. But love for national flocks and attachment with the natives did not allow the Buddhist and the Kshatriyas to join the Islam. This circumscribed them to be unsuccessful against the Muslims and to accept any status among the Hindus. Ultimately thus, the age-old struggle between the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas came to an end. S.V. Ketkar also states in this regard "After the overthrow of Hindu Princes by the Muhammedans, the Hindu Princes and the chiefs lost a good deal of their prestige, but the leadership of the Hindus instead of passing into the new political authority, namely Muhammedan rulers, passed almost entirely to the Brahmins."¹⁰

But the Brahmins [to that end] were not happy. To degrade and humiliate the Buddhists and the Kshatriyas, they discovered a new dictum of the Kaliyuga about the period from 1300 A.D. to 1600 A.D.¹¹ According to this dictum of the Kaliyuga there existed not the four but only two Varnas or the two castes namely the Brahmins and the Shudras. Due to this, the Kshatriyas and the Vaishyas and the Buddhists who returned to Hinduism, were placed under the Shudras. Since then everywhere in India, only two castes or the two Varnas that of the Brahmins and the Shudras are recognised in Hinduism.

Against this when the question arose of the Kshatriyahood

10. Ketkar, S.V., - An Essay on Hinduism, The History of Caste in India, p. 49.

11. Prasad, Narmadeshwar, - Op.cit., p. 84.

of Shivaji, the founder of the Maratha Power in Maharashtra, the Brahmins upheld the view of the Kaliyuga and flatly refused to admit Shivaji as the man of the Kshatriya Varna or Caste.¹² The heirs, therefore, in the house of the Chhatrapatis, also, according to the Brahminical concepts were not the Kshatriyas.¹³ This state of affairs was continued even after the introduction of the English education in modern periods. But the unhappy Kshatriyas under the British rule in India and Maharashtra, became more worried about their degraded religious status as the Hindus. Naturally, when Lokmanya Tilak questioned the Kshatriyahood of Shahu Chhatrapati¹⁴, the hero of this work, the non-Brahmins in Maharashtra gathered together to support Shahu and the cause of his as well as their own Kshatriyahood.

However, the history and authenticity of the Kaliyuga and its dictum of the two Varnas - the Brahmins and the Shudras - are not traceable. Nowhere are there evidences in the Hindu scriptures about this Kaliyuga. And to what the Brahmins took in support of their two Varna Theory is the name of an old Puran text which they had in fact held by an aphorism. A great authority on the Puranas, the late C.V. Vaidya in this regard had already pointed out that "we have never been able to

12. Sardesai, G.S., - History of the Marathas, Vol.I, p.216, Ed. 1971.

13. Gaga Bhatta although proved that Shivaji was a Kshatriya, heirs of his House like Pratapsingh Chhatrapati of Satara, were not accepted by the Brahmins as the Kshatriyas. See - Thakare, K.S., - Pratapsingha Chhatrapati Ani Rango Bapuji, pp. 110-115.

14. Tilak, Lokmanya. - Editorials in 'Kesari' of 21 & 22 Oct.1901.

trace the above dictum to its original sources. We find it quoted by Kamalakar Bhatt of Banaras in his work", "Shudra Kamalakar", but he did not plainly believe in it, he merely says, "In some Purana which contains this oft quoted line."¹⁵

THE PHASE OF NEW AWAKENING

The French Revolution gave an unprecedented turn to human history by the spirit of new ideas like equality, liberty and fraternity. Even hungry men stood for equal opportunities, human prestige and individual as well as national freedom. The French Revolution, it is true, did not bring freedom to all lands and all men in the world. But it is beyond doubt that it had inspired the whole human race to ameliorate the movement towards human freedom in all the nations. The British who had come to India, therefore, found themselves in an embarrassing atmosphere, although their main purpose in India was to grab the Indian wealth. The new responsibility of human service that they learnt from the French Revolution and the phase of liberalism born in England could not allow them to be satisfied with self profit and self happiness. So, they admitted frankly that "England has to fulfil a double mission in India. One destructive and the other regenerating the annihilation of old Asiatic society and the laying of the material foundation of western society in Asia."¹⁶

15. Vaidya, C.V., - Epic India, Vol. II, pp. 312 and 316.

16. Gadgil, D.R., - The Industrial Evolution of India in Recent Times (1933), p. 17.

FORCES FOR CHANGE

Numerous forces and various factors like the change in attitude of the British rulers, British Governmental new policies, spread of education and Christianity, new means of communication and transportation, new agrarian laws under the British, voluntary work of the indigenous workers and reformers and such other forces made the Indian society to adopt to new change and accept fruits of modernity. And among all the forces responsible for change in India, the introduction of the English education played the prime important role. It was not only foreign but entirely new also on ground that, it was open to all men irrespective of caste or religion. In the caste stratified society, only the Brahmins had the privilege to study and preach religious doctrines, to officiate as priests and to function as teachers. Sanskrit was called Devawani - the language of God - and was the medium of instruction. Further, this education was controlled and administered by the Brahmins. The old education, thus, was a means of training the pupil in accepting the existing caste structure of the Hindu society, in believing in the infallibility of the Vedas, and of the Brahmins, in interpreting these Vedas.¹⁷

The Muslims, no doubt, were benefited by the democratic character and brotherhood in Islam. But the Madarasa system

17. O'Malley, (Ed.), - Modern India and the West, (1941), p.139.

which they followed as the form of instructions had its own limitations. They only gave stress on Arabic as the Koran is in that language and Persian they studied as the language of Islamic culture and administration. Hindu Muslim educational patterns, therefore, were very appropriately described by O'Malley that "while the Hindu schools were designed for one favoured class of the community" and "Muslim schools were open without letting to all who confessed that there was but one God and Muhammad was his prophet."¹⁸

It was, under the circumstances, the English education was introduced in India not only to prepare persons for the bureaucratic set up of British India but to infuse potential power in Indians also. Persons like Raja Ram Mohan Roy looked upon the English education as a golden mean for changing and reconstructing the Indian society. He, therefore, in a memorandum to the Governor General in 1823 appealed the supreme authority of the British India to "promote a more liberal and enlightened system of instruction, embracing mathematics, natural philosophy, chemistry, anatomy, with other useful sciences."¹⁹ This had electrified the Indian souls for propselytizing the spirit of modernity and the new age of human cooperation and collective progress. It must not be forgotten again that practically all leaders of progressive

18. O'Malley, (Ed.), - Modern India and the West (1941), p.139.

19. Nurulla, Syed and Naik, J.P., - A Students' History of Education in India, p. 67.

movements, economic, political, social, religious or cultural belonged to the English educated intelligentsia.²⁰

UNDER THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT

The British Government in India, helped the growth of education either by starting itself or liberally aiding the educational institutions. But the very object they had in their mind was "to impress on middle class Indian youths, the glory and grandeur of Britain and to train them to be competent servants of a foreign bureaucracy."²¹ And because of this policy, the western types of educational institutions were established in India. It is true that the British neglected the mass education, but because of them only the doors of educational institutions were kept open to all people in India, irrespective of their social status. The Downward Percolating Theory of education that Lord Macaulay attempted at, although discouraged the majority, Woods Despatch of 1854 strikingly pushed the educational needs of commoners. It was in that report clearly stated the three objects of the educational system in India, namely 1) Spreading Western culture, 2) Securing properly trained servants for the public administration, and 3) Doing their duty to the sovereign by the Indian Subjects.²² Lord

20. Desai, A.R., - Social Background of Indian Nationalism, p.164.

21. Shelvantkar, K.S., - The Problem of India, p. 54.

22. Nurulla, Syed & Naik, J.P. - Op.cit., p. 179.

Dalhousie, the then Governor General of India, commented on the Woods Despatch that, "It contains a scheme of education for all India, for wider and more comprehensive than the local or the Supreme Government could have ever ventured to suggest."²³

Afterwards, the Hunter Commission appointed by Lord Ripon recommended the withdrawal of State, so far possible from the management of the institutions, which were imparting higher education. Besides, it had given a special encouragement for the education of the Muslims also. The new situation, thus, created by the Hunter Commission's recommendations, aroused the native elements to put their efforts in organising and starting educational institutions in India. Naturally, only after 1880, High Schools and Colleges sprang up at least at places of importance like Poona²⁴ and others. The period, onward the year 1880, therefore, is noted in the history of educational growth as that of the lion's share of the Indian private enterprise.²⁵

The Brahmins in India, on religious grounds, reluctantly joined the English education. After realising the firm footing of the British Power in India, grasped the utilitarian value of it and proved to be capable for acquiring English language.

23. Hunter, W.W. - The Marquiss of Dalhousie, p. 326.

24. The Poona English School, Poona was also started by Gopal Ganesh Agarkar and Lokmanya Tilak in 1880.

25. Nurulla, Syed and Naik, J.P., - Op.cit., p. 18.

All the great social reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Swami Dayananda Saraswati, Swami Ramakrishna Paramahansa, political leaders like Lala Lajpat Rai, Lokmanya Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal and others who were great alumni of the nineteenth century, if would have succeeded to abandon English education in India, hundred more years would have been passed without freedom from the British and modernity based on Science and Technology.

The incidents however, of the Brahminical oppositions to English and Missionary School Movements were not less. In connection with English education in Maharashtra what Rev. James Murray Mitchell said was quite true, "Our educational efforts had been greatly impeded by the wide excitement connected with Narayan's²⁶ baptisma."²⁷ The Brahmins, thus although opposed the English education in the beginning of the first half of the nineteenth century, opted for themselves to English learning and teaching by the middle of the same century.

Indian life in modern times by and large, due to the spread of English education, British Rule and Missionary movement went under change. But to ameliorate the speed of that change, many more forces had worked strenuously. The land Revenue

26. Mr. Shripat Sheshadri - a Brahmin boy who used to stay and study along his Christian converted brother Narayan was also baptised but on his father's request, was re-admitted to Hinduism. The re-admission of Narayan was fully propagated and supported by Bal Shastri Jambhekar, the first English Professor among the Brahmins and founder and editor of the first Marathi newspaper - a fortnightly 'Darpan' - See Walimbe, V.S. - MSP., Vol. I, p. 229.

27. Murrey Mitchell, Rev. James, - In Western India, p. 111.

system that introduced by the British, abolished the village ownership of land and "The organs of the centralized State took over almost all essential functions relating to the village life which were previously performed by the self governing village organisations."²⁸ As a result, the Brahmin domination over the Indian villages was loosened and people in them were made to come out of the Brahmin domination and into the contacts of the new world of the British Empire.

To change feudalism was not an easy task. The religio-economic feature of India was quite strange than other forms of feudalism in other countries. The introduction of private property in land, new land revenue system and commercialization of agriculture that the British followed, had far reaching effects on the economic structure of India. In place of village commune, due to British, the modern peasant proprietor or the zamindar appeared, and the class of village artisans and handicraft men disappeared with the rise of modern industry and transportation. The relations between men of different castes began to change. And new classes of capitalist industrial workers, agricultural labourers, tenants, landlords and merchants etc. were born. Thus the British, not only led India to the transformation of the economic anatomy of Indian society, but also its social physiognomy.²⁹

28. Desai, A.R., - Op.cit., pp. 42-43.

29. Ibid., pp. 34-35.

INDIGENOUS SOCIAL REFORMERS

The British administrative system all along with its legal and judicial branches imbibed upon the Indian mind much more than anything else, the significance of the liberal principle of equality of all citizens before law. English education also taught the liberal thoughts in the works of Milton, Mill, Macaulay and others. The Indians in that early phase were caught by those ideas and teaching and determined to devote their lives to the service and upliftment of the masses in their country. Till Shahu's time there was much progress in all walks of Indian life. Several social, religious and political movements had come up and started their respective work for awakening and reforming our people.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy and his Brahmo Samaj became the first pioneering and forerunners among all men and institutions and commenced their mission for social upliftment and eradication of evil customs in Indian society. It was he who formed and supported the scheme of the Hindu college, Calcutta in 1819.³⁰ And it was the Brahmo Samaj, started by him, on the 20th August 1829, preached, for the first time in India, the principles of individual freedom, national unity, solidarity, collaboration and the democratisation of all social institutions and social relations.³¹

30. Faruqhar, J.N., - Modern Religious Movements in India, p.83

31. Desai, A.R., - Op.cit., p. 290.

The Prarthana Samaj was closely connected with Maharashtra as it was founded at Bombay in 1867 by Atma Ram Pandurang (1823-1898). The chief object of this Samaj was to have rational worship and social reforms. It had, in fact, a programme on the lines of the Brahmo Samaj, but had its own identity. It believed primarily in a single, all powerful, all loving God, salvation through worship of God, denial of the ideas of Karma and transmigration, opposition to the authority of priests and idolatry.³² In Maharashtra, it had done some substantial work in regard to the removal of untouchability, caste system, intercaste marriages, widow-marriages, education of women and untouchables. In connection with the services of this Samaj, J.N. Faruqhar said that nearly every vigorous effort made in favour of social reform during the last thirty years of the nineteenth century had been started and largely carried on by the members of the Prarthana Samaj.³³

Swami Dayanand Saraswati founded the Arya Samaj at Bombay in 1875, but the principles accepted at Bombay were modified and given a final touch at Lahore. Consequently, instead of Bombay, then Lahore became the headquarters of the Arya Samaj.³⁴

Arya Samaj had contributed much more than any organisation

32. Heimsath, C.H., - Indian Nationalism and Hindu Social Reform, p. 106.

33. Faruqhar, J.N., - Op.cit., p. 81.

34. Ibid., p. 110.

of its kind in India. Its main aim was to rouse Hindu mind and preach them that "the religion of India as well as the sovereignty of India ought to belong to the Indian people."³⁵ It had started Schools, Highschools, Boarding Houses and Colleges in almost all parts of India to prepare Indians for shouldering the responsibilities of a new age of science and modernity. This Arya Samaj was patronised by Shahu Maharaja due to which a branch of it was opened in Kolhapur in 1918 A.D.³⁶

The Ramkrishna Mission founded by Swami Vivekanand in memory of his teacher - Guru Ram Krishna Paramhansa, was mainly concerned as the spiritual conquest of the world for revived Hinduism.³⁷

The Theosophical Society had also played very important role in the making of new and modern India. It was founded by Madame Balvatsky and Colonel Olcott in New York in 1875.³⁸ Under the leadership of Mrs. Besant who was engaged in the national politics of India and in the struggle for India's freedom from the British, the Theosophical Society was espoused the work of reviving and mobilizing old India for achieving

35. Faruqhar, J.N., - Op.cit., p. 112.

36. RGAK for 1917-1918, p. 46.

37. Vivekanand, Swami, - From Colombo to Almora - Seven Lectures, pp. 193-194 (1897).

38. Faruqhar, J.N., Op.cit., p. 208.

new life and freedom.

Besides, a number of small societies and organisations of the Hindus, Parsis, Muslims and others had ameliorated the speed of social awakening and better understanding between man and man. Due to this, the masses in India, held a view that the social reform movement was an era of enormous promise to them and nation.

MAHARASHTRA UNDER CHANGE

The modern history of Western India, especially that of Maharashtra, begins from 1818 A.D. when the Peshwas were defeated and the British became supreme in this country.³⁹ To win over the natives, soon the British Government declared that "there should be no interference with the tenets of any religious sects, that all Watan, Inam lands, established pensions and annual allowances should be respected and continued, provided the owners withdrew from the services of Bajee Rao and retire to their habitations in two months."⁴⁰ Assurance was also given that "whatever may be equitable will be duly enforced. Every individual will be secured against every species of tyranny and oppression. Upon this point let every person be satisfied."⁴¹ Thus, within no time the public in Maharashtra had been allowed to be absorbed into the

39. Faruqhar, J.N., Op.cit., p. 74.

40. Duff, Grant, - History of Marathas, Vol. II, p. 568.

41. Bombay Courier, 14th March, 1818.

generosity and power of the British Government.

Elphinstone, the first Governor of Bombay, had remained in Poona previously from 1810 to 1818 A.D. as the British Resident and had been fully acquainted with the attitude, character and the position of the Poona Brahmins. He, as well as other Britishers and even the British Government had formed a fear in their minds about the Poona Brahmins, more particularly about the Chitpavans who had enjoyed under the Peshwai "a special position of predominance to which there existed no parallel in the rest of India."⁴² After the Proclamation of Satara and hoisting the Union Jack at the Shaniwar Wada at Poona, respectively on 10th February and 10th May, 1818, Elphinstone made arrangements to please the Poona Brahmins through the distribution of money to them with free hand.⁴³ The people, other than the Brahmins, as described by Arthur Crawford, were "timorous and industrious, peaceable and law abiding - they only wanted governing not by the Brahmins."⁴⁴ The matter, thus in relation to non-Brahmin-Hindus and others was of little anxiety for the British.

The Rule of the Peshwai was in reality the Rule of the Brahmins.⁴⁵ The Brahmins were accepted as the Bhudev - Gods on

42. Kumar, Ravinder, - Western India in the Nineteenth Century, p.33.

43. Poona Residency Correspondence, Vol. 13, Poona Affairs, Part II, p.33.

44. Crawford, Arthur, - Our Troubles in Poona & The Deccan, p.76.

45. a) Ranade, G.M. - Op.cit., p. 195.

b) Deogirikar, T.R. - Wasukaka Joshi Ani Tyancha Kal, p. 79.

the earth. However, after the defeat of the Peshwas the Rule of the Brahmins, the commoners in Maharashtra were bewildered and felt that those who defeated the Brahmins - the devotees of God, must be great and their religion must be true and supreme.⁴⁶ A great shock was given by this attitude of the commoners to old type of Hindu integrity. The three classes, again, under the Peshwa Rule namely 1) the feudal lords or the Princes and their Knights, 2) the hereditary soldiers, and 3) the Bhikshukas or the Brahmin priestly caste, were thrown out of jobs. A new phase of crisis arose in the social life of Maharashtra. In the meanwhile, the movement of spreading Christianity and process of diffusing the English education had grown to secure support and favour of the Hindus. And many Hindus who received western education, felt strongly as P.G. Sahasrabudhey has pointed out, that the framework of any society and rules of it have been made by human beings and every man will have the same right.⁴⁷ This tendency thus, for the first time had attacked the Hindu traditionalism and helped to a move towards the new change and awakening among the people of Maharashtra.

But change was not an easy process, nay, it cannot be by its nature a popular feature of a period. All the traditions and customs, prevalent under the Peshwa period were carried out as before even after the commencement of the British Rule.

46. Ranade, G.M., - Op.cit., p. 14.

47. Sardar, G.B. (Ed.), - Maharashtra Jiwan, Vol. I, p. 294.

To feed the Brahmins as Lokahitawadi told, was supposed to be the only religion of the Hindus, the occasion, then, may be a birth, marriage or even death.⁴⁸ Every ceremony, every occasion, auspicious or inauspicious among the Hindus was to be accompanied by a dinner to them. A proverbial saying is this that the survival of the world-universe solely depends upon the will of God, Almighty God is governed by the Mantras or the Sanskrit hymns composed for ritualistic purposes, and since the Brahmins alone say those Mantras and perform the rituals, God himself has said that the Brahmins are Gods to Him.⁴⁹ As such, the matter related to the Hindu society, a step towards progress was always surrounded by a number of difficulties and problems.

The Hindus lived the life from the ancient times as it was carried to them by their forefathers. Naturally, education to the people other than the Brahmins as a rule was not available. The Brahmins again never tried to test their self knowledge and to see its utilitarian value in comparison to learned people in other countries. Literacy among them was common, no doubt, but in regard to rational tests they were far more backward. They did not know even the whereabouts and abilities of the British, and as to how and from what part of

48. Inamdar, N.R. (Ed.) - Lokahitawadinchi Shatapatre, p. 109.

49. Ibid., p. 342.

the world they had come to India.⁵⁰ The strict observance of the caste-system Chaturvarnya ~~was~~ much valued in day-to-day life of every Hindu. The eighteenth century had required strength to cement grassroots of the caste distinctions as the ideas of caste superiority and inferiority dominated the whole society.⁵¹ Instead of four main castes there prevailed about four thousand castes and sub-castes and the whole society was deteriorated on account of castes strifes within the Hindus.⁵² The Brahminical ideas of piety and cleanliness, specially in regard to worship of God, were much conservative and severe. To maintain special identity as the most pious and clean, the Brahmins including the Brahmin priests, strictly observed aloofness ~~of~~ even their own children and women while worshipping a deity. To show the graded importance of their respective castes, all members of the castes, other than the Brahmins followed the footsteps of the Brahmins. The restrictions regarding touch, eating bread and having blood relationship between castes and castes so also between high castes and low castes, were very strictly observed. Due to this the whole land of India ~~was~~ looked like a great prison.⁵³

DAWN OF AWAKENING

The tides of the western domination and knowledge were so

50. Walimbe, R.S., - Op.cit., Vol. II, p. 380.

51. Ranade, G.M., Op.cit., p. 72.

52. Sardar, G.B. (Ed.) - Maharashtra Jiwan, Vol. I, p. 158.

53. a) Ranade, G.M. - Op.cit., p. 73.

b) Sardar, G.B., Op.cit., Vol. I, p. 159.

fascinating that India succumbed to it as other countries in the East and West. Prayers to God and faith in Religion could not prevent the British March on the pious land of the Cows and Brahmins. However, a few sensible Indians like Raja Ram Mohan Roy penetrated deep into his own mind and on his own began to break the man-made barriers in the Hindu society. He was very-much sorry for the unactivised souls and disgusted as well as to see inhuman forms of Hindu life. He moved, therefore, caring little for his Brahminhood, Brahminical traditions, Gods and temples. He criticised Brahmin domination in Hinduism and revolted to awaken Bengal for social reforms and social change in Indian society.

The ignorant masses in Maharashtra never knew that a religion teaches and practices a principle of human equality. The Muslims who had come in contacts of Marathi land, never preached equality and maintained their many sub-divisions among the two sects - the Shiyas and Sunnis. Against this the Christian missionaries immediately espoused to their mission of preaching Christianity. To facilitate their work, they opened schools for Marathi people, and Charity Schools were established in Bombay from 1813 to 1818 A.D.⁵⁴ Marathi men in Bombay due to this, got for the first time an opportunity to learn western knowledge and specially, to study English. The "Society for promoting education of the poor within the Government of Bombay"

54. Wacha, Sir Dinsha , - Shells from the Sands of Bombay, (1920), p. 641.

was also established in 1815⁵⁵, on the support and initiation of some noble British men in Bombay. Primarily, this institution was concerned only for the education of the European children in Bombay. But from 1818, instructions for the natives were also imparted and the first school for the natives was opened by it on August 10, 1818^{55a}, at Bombay. The Elphinstone High School, which was renamed after the name of Lord Elphinstone, the first Governor of Bombay, was started in 1824. Later on, the branch of higher education in that High-school was opened in 1827 as the Elphinstone Institute and converted into Elphinstone College in 1834. The first Girls School in Bombay also began its functioning from 1824. In fact, under the inspired leadership of Lord Elphinstone, a network of Schools began to spread in the whole of Bombay Province. In 1844 the famous Grant Medical College of Bombay came into existence and in the year of Indian uprising of 1857, the Bombay University was founded. This great growth of the English education had proved a great solvent in breaking barriers of prejudices, superstitions and bringing the different communities together.

The transformation in the British economic system and British overseas commerce occurred due to the industrial revolution that had taken place about the beginning of the 19th century. It made Great Britain the workshop of the world.

55 This institution was renamed as the Bombay Native Education Society in 1819.

55a Bombay Courier, August 8, 1818.

And British manufacturers started pouring in year after year in Bombay.^{55b} The invention of the steam engine and its application to locomotion by land and sea stimulated the progress by carrying foreign manufacturers to the interior of the Indian continent. The Railway Projects of linking up Nagpur and Raichur by 1867 and 1871, so also Ahmedabad with Bombay in 1864 mobilised the move for urbanisation. The opening of Suez Canal in 1869 added the progress again by bringing more and more western goods to Bombay. The Telephone and Telegraph and the laying up of the Cable between Bombay and Aden slowly drew Indian economy in the vortex of world economy. The phenomenal growth of commerce, development of the cotton textile industry, Railway workshops, made Bombay the richest city on the Indian continent. Naturally, it drew to it swarms of people to make their fortunes or as in the case of ruined artisans and peasants, to seek a living. Alike this the Parsis, Gujarathi Baniyas, Jains, Khojas, Menons, Bhoras, Khatiwadis, the Bene Israel community and many other had come to Bombay. The Deccan Brahmins appeared at Bombay in consequence of British relations with the Peshwas and their number increased subsequent to the overthrow of the Peshwa's Government and pacification of the Deccan.⁵⁶

The trade boon of 1860 attracted to Bombay, another wave

55b. Pusalkar, A.D. and Dighe, V.G., - Bombay, p. 72.

56. Ibid., p. 75.

of immigrants. The growing mill industry called for labour and this was supplied by the Deccan peasant and artisan. The sum total effect of this growth of Bombay had certainly helped to change the attitude of the natives and foster the cause of social change and modernity. The 19th century thus witnessed the birth of a new spirit in this heterogeneous mass of humanity. The varied contacts of Bombay citizen developed in them a wide outlook on matters of social political and religious plain. A sense of corporate life began to grow as a result of education, of the growth of Indian journalism and the political awakening in the country.⁵⁷ And Bombay thus became the vanguard of progress. Ultimately all these men gathered in Bombay from various parts of India, got themselves accustomed to new change in life and then became the carriers of this change in life for harnessing the cause of modernizing Maharashtra.

POONA ADAPTS TO NEW CHANGE

Opposition to change was the religion of this ancient land and Brahmins were the master^x of religion. After Buddha the Great^e, and Vardhaman Mahavira, therefore, no social revolutionary was seen by Indian History. [Brahmins were the first and foremost to lead the Hindu life. Under the British, Elphinstone the first Governor of Bombay, also tried to win their favour

57. Pusalkar, A.D. and Dighe, V.G., - Bombay, p. 76.

and he, therefore, "appointed a committee of five distinguished Shastris of Poona headed by Raghu Acharya Chintamani to supervise the distribution of bounties to the Brahmins that he had recontinued through recontinuation of the Dakshina."⁵⁸

From the very beginning of his career as the Governor of Bombay Elphinstone strongly opposed the spread of Christianity. In one of the letters to the Government of India, he warned that "the only effect of introducing Christianity in our schools would be to sound the alarm, and to warn the Brahmins of the approaching danger and in this instance the danger involves not failure of our plans of education, but the dissolution of our empire."⁵⁹ He, then, instead of encouraging the Christian missionaries for spreading of Christianity and through it the principle of equality of man, made efforts to win over the confidence of the Brahmins. To please the Brahmins, the Poona College was started by him in 1819.⁶⁰ In this college as Grant Duff has told, even though a few Brahmins joined with reluctance, at the beginning, it had, in 1822, 143 Brahmin students and all of them were paid per month per head Rs. 5/- as scholarship.⁶¹ However, that college was equally informed with the view that the most effective means of

58. Kumar, Ravindra, - Op.cit., p. 39.

59. Colebrook, Sir T.E., - Life of Mountstuart Elphinstone, Vol. II, p. 156 (London, 1884).

60. Walimbe, R.S., - Op.cit., p. 95.

61. Duff, Grant H.J., - History of the Marathas, Vol. II, p.619.

converting the Brahmins to western values, lay in creating an institution that would lead them gradually from the study of the Hindu religion texts to an examination of the philosophy and sciences of the west.⁶² The Poona English School, opened after 1831 by the Scottish Christian Missionaries also played an important role in that regard.

With the beginning of the English education in Poona, a new trend of thinking was witnessed. Utilitarian values of education and English language were made known. The prudent among the Brahmins, then began to preach as Morshastri, a Brahmin teacher in Poona, advised his student Mr. Krishna Shastri Chiplunkar, the father of Vishnushastri Chiplunkar, that the days of earning bread by Sanskrit learning had gone away and only the acquisition of English had become necessary.⁶³ By the time of 1868, in Poona, there were 96 Government schools, one High School, English Schools upto IV standard, one training school and 83 Marathi Schools. The total number of students was also increased from a few in 1818 to 5725 in 1868. The Deccan College was also started for higher learning in 1868 and in the same year, the first Engineering student of Poona got through the examination.⁶⁴ Poona, the centre of the old Brahminical ideology, thus got converted into the new change

62. Kumar, Ravindra, - Op.cit., p. 150.

63. Deogirikar, T.R. - Wasukaka Joshi Ani Tyancha Kal, p. 28.

64. Ibid., p. 69.

and renaissance.

RISE OF REFORMERS IN MAHARASHTRA

The gradual spread of Christianity, English education, western knowledge, new set up of administration, new means of transportation and many other factors, ultimately brought a change in the outlook of Marathi men. The new concepts of legality, efficiency, and responsibility that the British introduced, inspired them for new reforms in life. This had systematically led the old order to disintegration.⁶⁵ Lord Macaulay and other British men thought to convert India as "English in tastes, in moral and in intellect."⁶⁶ And the new educated people in Maharashtra realised that no other reason but the old way of life and religion were the sole causes for the degradation of nation.⁶⁷ The persons who held such view and contributed substantially for the reconstruction of the present Maharashtra, were mostly born before 1830.⁶⁸

Balshastri Jambhekar was the first and the foremost among all the modern thinkers and reformers of Maharashtra.

65. Kumar, Ravindra, Op.cit., p. 71.

66. Minute by Lord Macaulay dated 2nd February 1835, p. 7.

67. Sardar, G.B., Op.cit., Vol. I, p. 294.

68. 1) Balshastri Jambhekar - Born in 1812, Died in 1846.

2) Bhau Mahajan B. 1815 - D. 1890.

3) Lokahitawadi alias Gopal Hari Deshmukh - B.1824, D. 1892.

4) Krishnashastri Chiplunkar - B. 1824, D. 1878.

5) Vishnushastri Pandit - B. 1827, D. 1876.

6) Vishnu Buva Brahmachari - B. 1825, D. 1871.

7) Jotirao Phuley - B. 1827, D. 1890.

It was he who started the first Marathi newspaper, "The Bombay Darpan" on January 6, 1832. And the very intention behind starting this paper was mentioned as "Stimulated by a desire to encourage among their country men the pursuit of English Literature, and to open a field for free and public discussion on points connected with the prosperity of this country and the happiness of its inhabitants."⁶⁹

Balshastri was aware of the new change. He was the first Brahmin from Maharashtra who appraised the mission of Raja Ram Mohan Roy. Rightly, therefore, his "Darpan" said of Raja Ram Mohan Roy that the Raja had keen interest in the field of education as well as in theological ideas. Mostly because of this he gave up his original Varnashrama form of the Brahminical religion and accepted the Vedant - the way of the Vedic life.⁷⁰ Naturally as a reformer Balshastri advocated firmly the readmission of Shripad Sheshadri from Christianity to Hinduism and to Brahminhood. Although he lived a very short life of 34 years, his anti-traditional views and guidelines permanently cherished the move towards the progress of a new age in Maharashtra.

Bhau Kunte⁷¹ alias Bhau Mahajan, who also used to stay in

69. Darpan, - Introduction - dated 12.11.1831.

70. Darpan, - dated 6.1.1832.

71. Deogirikar, T.R., - Op.cit., p. 97.

Bombay like Balshastri Jambhekar started in 1841, the "Prabhakar" weekly. This Prabhakar had published the revolutionary writings of Lokahitawadi and, had tremendously influenced the educated Brahmins and non-Brahmins in Maharashtra.

Lokahitawadi also started a weekly called "Lokahitawadi" and was one of the founder members of the 'Indu Prakash'.⁷² Besides he was closely associated with the Arya Samaj.

Lokahitawadi was very much influenced by the western ideology and thoughts. His revolutionary articles published in Prabhakar are known as "Shatapatre" (hundred letters). Here we find him a great critic throwing light on numerous topics of social and political evils and reforms in Hinduism. But he had no courage to break any of the traditions. Specially having fear of excommunication by his Brahmin caste-fellows, he did lose a great opportunity of visiting England.⁷³ However, it cannot be denied that he was the first revolutionary who, preached the principle of social equality.

After 1840, a new galaxy of new thinkers and reformers in Maharashtra came forward to accelerate the cause of reforms and social justice. Vishnu Buva Brahmachari, alike Karl Marx,⁷⁴ tried, of course, without success to spread a new philosophy

72. Deogirikar, T.R., - Op.cit., p. 98.

73. Ibid., p. 99.

74. Sahasrabudhey, P.G., Bharatiya Loksatta, p. 59.

of social and political life. But it was Dadoba Panduranga, belonging to a lower caste had given a real stimulus to the thought of social equality in Maharashtra.⁷⁵ While at Surat in Government service, he established the Manava Dharma Sabha in 1844. A secret society (Gupta Sabha) in Bombay called as the Param Hansa Sabha was also established by him in 1848.⁷⁶ This Sabha was mostly concerned to its main objects of securing prohibition of early marriage, promoting marriages of widows and to introduce various reforms in Hinduism.⁷⁷

MAHATMA PHULEY AND HIS SATYA SHODHAK SAMAJ

The rise of Mahatma Phuley to eminence and status as social reformer was a great landmark in the history of modern Maharashtra. He was the first in modern times who broke Hindu traditions and opened doors of learning to all people irrespective of their castes and religions. Ignorance to him was the real enemy of the nation.⁷⁸ According to him, no other weapon but education could alone ~~truly~~ make our nation free from all bondages. To educate the masses, he, therefore, began his life long mission by the opening of the first school in ~~the~~ in Poona in 1851. The year 1852 had seen him opening first school

75. Keer, D.R., - Mahatma Jotirao Phoolley, p. 57.

76. Faruqhar, J.N., - Op.cit., p. 75.

77. Keer, D.R., - Mahatma J.P., p. 57.

78. Deogirikar, T.R., - Op.cit., p. 106.

for girls in Poona in 1851. The year 1852 had seen him opening the first school in Vetar Peth of Poona for untouchable boys and girls. Not only that but a step further also he went to inspire the lower strata of the Hindu society by founding the Mahar-Mang Education Society in 1853.⁷⁹ How to liberate fellow citizens from the state of slavery that the Brahmins created, was his real and genuine concern. To help the poor and needy, simultaneously, he opened orphanages and maternity home specially for misguided pregnant widows. He started unions of farmers and labourers for solving their problems and ^{seeking} upliftment.

But Phuley was not satisfied with things he had done and preached. Unless masses incline to give up old but bad things, prepare to accept new and worthy conventions and by far and large understand the strength of their unity and organisation, no work of a reformer would help a society to overcome the age-old difficulties. He, owing to this understanding, started the Satya Shodhak on September 24, 1873 at Poona and declared the main object of his Samaj as -

"To redeem the Shudras from the slavery of the Brahman, Bhat, Joshi, Upadhey and such others and their scriptures due to which Shudras were treated as low caste and many were * inflected by them."⁸⁰

79. Govande, V.B., - Trimurti Darshan or Sadashivrao Govande Yanche Charitra, p. 59.

80. Deogirikar, T.R., - Op.cit., p. 106.

The Satya Shodhak Samaj, primarily concerned ^{to} awakening of self-respect in the peasants and toiling masses of Maharashtra. The subjects discussed in the weekly meetings of the Samaj were the necessity of temperance and compulsory education and the brotherhood of man.⁸¹ The Brahmins, as [^]were the opponents of equality between man and man and believed in the Chaturvarnya theory, preached only the superiority of the Brahmins and inborn status of man in Hinduism. Mahatma Phuley's work, hence, of creating equality between man and man was bitterly opposed by the Brahmins. Society in Maharashtra was divided, therefore, into two main groups, that one who sought equality and the other who opposed it. Here originated the Brahmin versus non-Brahmin movement in Maharashtra.

The Satya Shodhak Samaj started by Mahatma Phuley, was the first institution to launch a social movement in modern India. It raised its voice against social slavery and demanded social justice.⁸²

JUSTICE RANADE AND OTHERS

Justice Mahadev Govind Ranade as James Kellock said, was the inspiring and dominating mind at the back of most of the political movements carried out in the last quarter of the nineteenth century by Indians.⁸³ However, the association of

81. Keer, D.R., - Mahatma J.P., p. 127.

82. Ibid., p. 130.

83. James, Kellock, - Mahadev Govind Ranade, p. 111.

Ranade with the cause of social reform was more weighty and ever fascinating. In fact he had richly contributed to thought and action in the fields of economic, industrial, educational and religious life of India. He regarded Raja Ram Mohan Roy as the person who had "turned the flow of the national current in the right direction."⁸⁴

But not because he was a Chitpavan Brahman, but in general as a Brahmin reformer, there were limitations to Ranade's social reforms. In fact he was neither a revolutionary nor a revivalist, but an evolutionist.⁸⁵ He touched all problems of man's life and proposed reforms and even state action⁸⁶ to reform the society. But it is a tragedy of his noble reformatory thoughts that he was not a practical reformer. After the death of his first wife he too did not refuse to marry a girl of eleven years and not preferred to marry a young widow. Besides he never looked upon the untouchables as equals.

However, with all his drawbacks he was a great among the lot that India lived of his time. It was he who took the lead to have a separate organisation for problems of social reforms.⁸⁷

84. James, Kellock, - Mahadev Govind Ranade, p. 111.

85. Suda, J.P., - Main Currents of Social and Political Thoughts in Modern India, Vol. I, pp. 62-63.

86. Parvate, T.V., Mahadev Govind Ranade, p. 147.

87. Ibid., p. 63.

The National Social Conference was launched on his efforts only from 1889 along with the All India Congress Conference.

Ranade believed, the success of social reforms only by changing the hearts of individuals and only by placing them under discipline of better ideas. In one of his addresses he observed:

Reform in the matter of infant marriage and enforced widowhood, in the matter of temperance and purity, inter-marriage between castes, the elevation of the low castes, and the readmissions of converts, and the regulation of endowments and charities, are reforms only so far and no further, as they check the influence of the old ideas, and promote the growth of the new tendencies.⁸⁸

Gopal Ganesh Agarkar⁸⁹ was the vanguard of social reforms in Maharashtra. The "Sudharak" or Reformer, the paper he started, appealed to the people in a modest way as -

"Sheer physical force, as an instrument of political, social or moral conversation, has ceased to exist, and the days of intellectual persuasion have come."⁹⁰

88. Chintamani, C.Y. (Ed.), - Indian Social Reform, p. 96.

89. Gopal Ganesh Agarkar, - B. 14.7.1856 - D. 17.6.1895.

90. Gokhale, P.P., - Agarkaranchi Olakh, p. 46.

According to him casteless society can only create a solid and ever lasting unity and integrity of India. Individual freedom, he needed for the establishment of a society based on equality and needed no casteism in dining and matrimonial affairs of man.⁹¹ To abolish the form of untouchability, he taught it proper first to educate masses, and personally^x did the job of a teacher. Really he was the teacher not of a school but of the whole society.

CONCLUSION

Thus on the eve of Shahu's rise to assumption of the power as the Chhatrapati of Kolhapur, the majority^x people in Maharashtra were eager to make their move towards social, political and economic equality. And what they needed at the most was the hand of a man who would lead them to proper destination for rebuilding India based on social justice, national unity and freedom to all.

91. Gokhale, P.P., - Agarkaranchi Olakh, p. 46.

C H A P T E R - I I

HISTORY OF KOLHAPUR AND

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF SHAHU CHHATRAPATI

Introduction :

Shahu Maharaja, the Chhatrapati or the king of the Kolhapur State¹ in British India, was the direct descendent² of Chhatrapati Shivaji, the founder of the Maratha Power. The people, therefore, in the State of Kolhapur, as well as in the Marathi speaking land looked upon him "with feeling of veneration and affection".³ However what for he is remembered or known today is not that crown he had carried on, or the position of a Chhatrapati (Raja) he bore; but the noble services he had rendered in the upliftment of the masses and the humanitarian outlook towards all people, irrespective of their castes and creeds, he had adopted.

However, Shahu was not born in the house of Kolhapur Chhatrapati. By the way of an adoption he was made the Chhatrapati of Kolhapur. Naturally nothing new or extraordinary

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1. Kolhapur was the major Maratha State in the South-West region of the Bombay Presidency in British India. It was, however merged, with all other Indian Princely States, into Free India, on February 2, 1949. The region of the Kolhapur State with some alterations was named as the Kolhapur District and it is now in Maharashtra State.
 2. Although, he was adopted from the Kagal House, as the Chhatrapati of Kolhapur, he was the direct descendent as the Chhatrapati.
 3. A) Quoted Gokhale G.K., From the Book 'Kolhapur' P.7, 1948.
B) Vaidya, G.B., -(Edr), - Balbodha, P.30, Bombay 1898.

specially in the field⁰ of royal nobility was expected of him. Moreover almost all other Rajas - the kings of other princely States in India were either engrossed in luxurious worldly life or neglected their duties towards their people. Against this it's a matter of surprise that he lived as a commoner even after becoming the Chhatrapati, the Raja of Kolhapur.

The big turban on his head and the Khaki Coat which he used to wear posed him as a farmer and the masses held him in number of stories and ballads relating to him as "Lok^XRaja"⁴ king of the masses.

In the following pages, therefore, an account of the Kolhapur State is given before depicting the life sketch of this royal personality.

FOUNDATION OF KOLHAPUR GADI

After the death of Shivaji, the Great, Sambhaji, his eldest son, got himself coronated in January 1681, and carried on the mission of his father. In the struggle against the Mughals, he was captured and tortu^rously killed by Aurangzeb on March 11, 1681. The Mughals, afterwards, captured Sambhaji's queen Yesubai and her minor son, Shivaji alias Shahu. However the Marathas, instead of cessation of the struggle for their independence, made Rajaram, the younger son of Shivaji the Great,

4. Lokarajya (Marathi) PP.6 and 40 to 43, Govt. of Maharashtra Publications, Bombay, November, 1974.

their Chhatrapati and refused to submit to Aurangzeb. And about this time when the war of independence thus was at its peak, Rajaram died in 1700 A.D. at Sinhagad. Tarabai, his widow, the freedom loving lady, therefore, immediately declared her four year⁺ old son Shivaji, the successor of Rajaram and acted as a regent ^{*}in 1707.

The circumstances were really very much unfavourable to Tarabai. Almost all the Marathi Lands, including Panhala and Vishalgad were conquered by Aurangzeb. However, on account of illness and old age he returned to Ahmednagar,⁵ which helped Tarabai and her Marathas to regain the possessions of Panhala and other lands lost to the Mughals. In the mid^{*}, Aurangzeb died in 1707 and his son and successor Muazzam alias Bahadur Shah I, adopted a very shrewd policy to divide and destroy the Maratha forces. Accordingly Sambhaji's son, Shivaji alias Shahu was released by him on condition that the latter should claim and demand, from Tarabai the throne of the Chhatrapatis⁶ as being the legitimate heir. Then after Shahu's arrival in the Deccan a great dilemma was witnessed by the Maratha country. Tarabai opposed Shahu's stand and justified her son's claim by a letter of 17th September 1707 arguing that "the kingdom of Shivaji (the founder) was destroyed in the days of Sambhaji and her husband Rajaram founded a new State to which Shahu,

5. Sharma, S.R., - Mughal Empire in India, P. 320.

6. Sardesai, G.S., - The Main Currents of Maratha History, P. 97.

Sambhaji's son could have no claim".⁷ This was not acceptable to some Maratha Commanders like Dhanaji Jadhav and his trusted colleagues Khando Ballal, Naro Ram and Balaji Vishwanatha. They joined Shahu at Satara and on 12th January 1708 his coronation ceremony was celebrated. Thus as wished by the Mughals, the two Maratha States came into existence to divide the Maratha Power. But it was the irony of the Mughals that although these two states, Satara and Kolhapur had between them a feud of serious nature, the Mughal emperors after Aurangzeb, instead of growing strong, turned to be weak to ruin their power. Later on the Maratha States at Satara and Kolhapur, ended the feud among themselves and came forth for friendship ^xat the Warana Treaty of March 1731. Thereafter, as it was stated in the Warana Treaty, the Kolhapur State was to content "with the sovereignty of country between the rivers Warana and Krishna on the north and Tungabhadra on the South with some specified exceptions".⁸

During the Peshwa regime in Maharashtra, the relations between ⁸the Kolhapur and Poona did not remain cordial. The Peshwas right from the beginning of their rule in Poona were trying to influence and dominate Kolhapur. But Kolhapur Chhatrapatis, and specially the Brahmin ^xadvises of the Kolhapur

7. Sardesai, G.S., - Balaji Vishwanatha, P. 36.

8. a) Captt. Edward, W. West; (Edr) - Diary of the Raja of Kolhapur, Introduction, P.X, Smith Elder and Co. London 1872.

b) Garge, S.M., - Karvir Riyasat, PP.136-137. Poona 1968.

Chhatrapatis did ~~pay~~^{not} no attention to Poona influence and whenever trouble was created by Poona, Kolhapur did try every time successfully to maintain its unity, and integrity against Poona. The Peshwas, therefore, to influence the Kolhapur Brahmins and pressurise the Chhatrapatis, created many feudatory principalities around Kolhapur like Miraj, Sangli etc. with Brahmin heads.

Out of these nine States in the Southern Maratha Country, Jat and Mudhol belonged to Maratha chiefs while the remaining seven were held by the chiefs who were Konkanastha Brahmins. Of these six were the members of a single family that is the Patwardhans. The last State Ramdurg was held by the Bhaves.⁹

The Kolhapur State occupied the first position among the feudatory States of the Bombay Presidency in point of density of population and surpassed even Gujarath the 'Garden of the Presidency' in this respect.¹⁰

BOUNDARIES

Kolhapur principality was bounded on the west by the Sahyadri and the dividing line between the territory of Kolhapur and the Ratnagiri District was the wellknown Kala Kada - a black precipice except where in certain places as in the Bavada Estate- the territory comprises villages at the foot of the mountains.

9. Census of 1901 Kolhapur And S.M.C. States, P.2.

10. Ibid, PP. 2 and 8.

The Varana, a tributary of the Krishna was the northern boundary, while the Krishna itself formed the eastern limit of the principality. Eversince the partition treaty between the illustrious heads of the two branches of Shivaji's family - Shahu Chhatrapati of Satara and Sambhaji Chhatrapati of Kolhapur, ¹¹ defined the Northern and Eastern boundaries of Kolhapur. The Southern boundary was stated as the Tungabhadra, but the Peshwas showed very scanty respect to the treaty made between the Satara and Kolhapur Maharajas. And slowly they made encroachments on the territory assigned to Kolhapur and ceded it to Jahagirdars like that of Sangli, Miraj; etc. who were appointed to keep Kolhapur in check.¹¹

The Kolhapur territory as it was in the time of Shahu was roughly covered by the hilly portions of the Deccan plateau. The soil of the western part is poor and shallow while that of the eastern is rich and black. The poor soil of the Ghat i.e. hilly portion, commonly called the Konkan was sure of a regular rainfall in the first contact with the south-west monsoon, but the tracts further away from the Ghats and on the Deccan plateau were cursed with a precarious, scanty and unseasonable rainfall. This state was accentuated beyond the Krishna and in the Kolhapur territory in the Mahals of Raibag and Katkol. Large portions, generally those lying between the Ghats and the Krishna were very favourably situated and the rainfall was more regular.¹²

11. Ibid, - P. 8.

12. Ibid, - P. 9.

THE KOLHAPUR RULERS

After the death of Rajaram, his two wives, Tarabai and Rajasbai remained in ^xconfirmity with one another throughout the days of the strife against Shahu. Naturally claim ^xgoes to them as "the founders of the Kolhapur dynasty".¹³ And because of their unanimous stand, Shivaji, Tarabai's son, was proclaimed as the Chhatrapati of Kolhapur and Tarabai was able to live alongwith Rajasbai and her son Sambhaji at Panhala.¹⁴ She then as the dowager empress, commanded the Maratha forces in the name of her son, Chhatrapati Shivaji of Kolhapur. This Shivaji, the first Chhatrapati of Kolhapur is called Shivaji I of Kolhapur.

Shivaji I of Kolhapur was ousted by his step-brother - Sambhaji, the son of Rajasbai who declared himself the Chhatrapati, some time between August and September 1714.¹⁵

On the death of Sambhaji, the second Chhatrapati of Kolhapur, the Gadi remained vacant in 1760. Jijabai, wife of Sambhaji, therefore, very skillfully managed to win favour of Peshwa . Madhavrao for adopting Mankoji, the son of Shahji Bhosale, hailed from the house of Sharfoji Bhosale of Khanvat in Indapur district.¹⁶ The boy, Mankoji was born on 16th March 1750 and was adopted and renamed as Shivaji by Jijabai in 1762. That

13. Malgaonkar, Manohar, - Chhatrapatis of Kolhapur, P. 80.

14. Ibid, - P. 139.

15. Ibid,

16. Modak, B.P., - Kolhapur Ani Karnatak Prantiya Rajye Va Sansthana Yancha Itihas., (Marathi) P.47, Kolhapur 1877.

Shivaji then became Shivaji II of Kolhapur and ruled the State till 1813. His son and successor, Shambhu alias Abasaheb Maharaj was assassinated in 1821. So Abasaheb's son, Shahaji alias Buwasaheb Maharaj, became the Chhatrapati.

Buwasaheb Maharaj was a prince of activities and had adopted an offensive policy which was taken by the British as an offence ~~against~~ the chieftains in the neighbouring land. The British as in those times were growing in Maharashtra, thought of Buwasaheb's activities as a threat to peace and order. They, with all their might then succeeded to force Buwasaheb to "reduce his effective military force to 400 horses and 800 infantry, to discharge his Arab guard, to cede Chikodi and Manoli districts, to surrender the mountain fortresses of Panhala and Pavangad, and to permit a British regiment to be quartered in Kolhapur."¹⁷ By this treaty of 1827 Buwasaheb was very much humiliated. But as his army was also reduced, he was forced to live the life of humiliation. Under the circumstances while on his pilgrimage to Tuljapur he died in 1834.

Buwasaheb Maharaj had two sons, 1) Shivaji alias Babasaheb born on the 16th December 1830 from his fourth wife and 2) Chima-saheb, born on 8th January 1831, from another Rani Narmadabai.

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17. a) Ibid, - Part III, P.28.
 b) The Treaty between the Chhatrapati and the Company was signed on October 23, 1827 at Kolhapur.
 c) See "Treaties And Agreements Concluded Between The British Government And The Kolhapur State Since The Year 1766 A.D. And Kharitas Bearing on The Subject", PP.21 to 24. 1932.

The primogeniture favoured Shivaji and so he became the Chhatrapati and ruled Kolhapur from 1838 to 1866 as Shivaji III alias Babasaheb Maharaj.

Babasaheb Maharaj bore two sons but both of them died in their childhood. Therefore he adopted Nagojirao Patankar, the son of his elder sister on August 4, 1866 while on death bed. Nagojirao Patankar after his adoption to the Gadi of Kolhapur was named as the Rajaram Maharaj and was the eighth king of Kolhapur. It is said of him that he had showed excellent promise of becoming almost an ideal Indian ruler,¹⁸ but could not survive long. It is said that he was an extraordinary and the most brilliant boy among all the boys of his age. His English was very strong and he used to keep a diary of day-to-day accounts in his life.¹⁹ He went to visit England and while returning from abroad via Italy died suddenly(?) at Florence on 30th November 1870, at the age of twenty only.

Then comes the period of Shivaji IV's tragic life. He came from the Bhosale family of Sawarde and was adopted by Tarabai, the senior wife of Rajaram on October 23, 1871. After becoming the Chhatrapati of Kolhapur he too showed signs of good progress and high calibre for becoming a capable ruler.

18. Captt. Edward, W. West, Edr., - The Diary of the Raja of Kolhapur., P. 131.

19. The Diary of Rajaram Maharaj was edited and published by Capt. West and known as "The Diary of the Raja of Kolhapur".

During his minority period, a new set up of the Regency Council and its administration was introduced in the Kolhapur State and Abasaheb Ghatge was appointed the Member President of the Council by the British.²⁰

Shivaji IV was said^{*} to have gone insane or mentally derailed. He was given treatment for some period, and was sent to the fort of Ahmednagar. There in the fort of Ahmednagar he was murdered on December 25, 1883.²¹ The repercussions of his unnatural death got hold of whole Kolhapur and the tranquility in the State was disturbed. Besides, nobody knew on that occasion, the future plans of the British Government about the arrangement of Kolhapur administration. This was due to the fact that the revised Agreement between Kolhapur and the British Government signed on 20th October 1862,²² gave ^t(the) sole power to the British either to continue or discontinue the Regency Administration that was introduced from 1882. Abasaheb Ghatge the Regent, therefore, immediately got a resolution passed in his Regency Council as to know what exactly was taking place. The recorded Resolution No.550 of 25th December 1883 in the Regency Council Journal Book, for the year 1883-1884 speaks of the situation when it runs "The Regent in Council deeply regrets the decease

20. National Archives of India - File No.K.W.No.-I From Govt.of Bombay No.5301(confidential) dated 17th March,1882. P.24.

21. Malgaonkar, Manohar, - op.cit. P.552.

22. See the Book of Agreement referred to Reference No.15 c) clause No.6, P.22.

of His Highness, the Maharaja of Kolhapur at Ahmednagar, the news of which sad event was received this morning by telegram from Dr. Birch, the Maharaja's guardian and desires that the Political Agent be requested to communicate the same to Government, and feeling a doubt as to whether the present form of the administration under the terms of the Government Resolution (Political Department) No.1236 dated 13th March 1862, the first para of which presupposes the Existence of Maharaja can have a locus standi, further desires that the Political Agent be solicited to favour him with instructions as to what should be done under the present altered circumstances".²³

The Kolhapur State, thus, in those days, like other princely states in India, was very much dependent on the active advice and directions of the British Government. And no regent or any man of high position in the Kolhapur Darbar was permitted by the British to act on his own. Against this situation the Regent, Abasaheb Ghatge was not knowing, even after the death of Shivaji IV, that an opportunity would come to him to make his eldest son Yashwant, the Chhatrapati of Kolhapur.

CHHATRAPATI SHAHU

Chhatrapati Shahu was neither a Prince by birth nor an heir to the throne of Kolhapur Chhatrapatis. He was simply the eldest son of Sir Jayasingrao Abasaheb Ghatge, the Chief of

23. KAO, - Regency Council Journal Book., 2A, 1883-1884.
Resolution No.550, dated 25-12-1883, P. 336.

Kagal senior, and was born at the Laxmi Niwas Palace,²⁴ Bavada, Kolhapur on 26th July 1874.²⁵ The incidence^x had taken place^x because Shahu's father, Abasaheb, as being the prominent member of the Kolhapur Darbar used to stay there in that palace. And this was not sufficient to predict that this boy would become the Chhatrapati of Kolhapur.

Chhatrapati Shahu, till ten years of age was known by his original name - Yashwantrao alias Babasaheb and when he was a child of one and half years had an attack of convulsion obviously not fatal. At the age of three he lost his mother in 1877. Abasaheb, his father therefore, married for the second time. That noble lady the step-mother of Shahu who was named after Shahu's real mother as Radhabai, loved and brought up Shahu and his brother Bapusaheb, as her own sons.

PARENTAL HERITAGE

In both of them, the father and mother, Shahu had a great lineage of heritage. His father Abasaheb Ghatage was a Sardar of Kagal and his mother Radhabai was from a famous Maratha clan of Mudhol.

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24. The birth place of Shahu after the merger of Kolhapur State, was made the Govt. Circuit House, but from the Shahu Centenary year, it is preserved as a memorial of Shahu Maharaja.
 25. The Administrative Report of Kolhapur State for the year 1892-93 gives the birth date of Shahu as June 26, 1874; and Sir Roper Lethbridge, in "The Golden Book of India" published from London in 1893, mentions the year 1875 as Shahu's birth year. Both the dates are wrong. Kakasaheb Ghatge, the Chief of Kagal Junior gave the correct date of Shahu as 26th July, 1874. See - Shahu Rumat No. 2, P. 272 from the Kolhapur Archives.

The Chief of Mudhol belonged to the Bhosale Ghorpade family which like others claimed to be a Rajput origin. Baji Ghorpade of Mudhol had served the Maratha Country in the times of Shivaji the Great and other Maratha warriors. And the Mudhol Jagir was first mentioned in connection with the early history of Shivaji.²⁶

Radhabai's father, Balvantrao became the chief of Mudhol at the age of 13, when his father Venkatrao, the great benefactor of Mudhol died in 1856. However, after attaining maturity, the real rule of Balvantrao began from 1861 only. But soon after the beginning of his royal career, he died in 1862 leaving two children a girl named Radhabai and a boy Vyankatrao. This Radhabai had been married to Jaysingrao Abasaheb the nephew of Babasaheb Chhatrapati of Kolhapur.²⁷

The Ghorpades of Mudhol had earned a great title to their credit for their valour and chivalrous deeds in building the Maratha Empire.

THE GHATAGE'S OF KAGAL

The Ghatage's of Kagal, of course, had a rich historical background and a vast chapter in the history of the Marathas would go to describe their deeds and glorious past.

26. Gazetteer of India-Bombay Presidency, Vol.XXIV., Kolhapur Bombay 1886. P.393.

27. Ibid, P.395.

Originally the Ghatages were the Rajputs of a well known Rathod family of Udepur and after migration to the Deccan in the fourteenth century, they were known first by the surname "Rane".²⁸ In the course of time, they, then, settled down at Padli, a small village near Satara.²⁹ Mr. Kamraj, a young man from that family once got an opportunity to win the favour of the Sultan of Bedar, by way of ringing a Ghat or Bell "hung high above the reach of ordinary men, by taking a double jump in the air."³⁰ He was, therefore, awarded by the Bedar Sultan, a new title "Ghatage" with a Mansabdari or hereditary office in the Court of Bedar.

After the fall of Bedar, the Ghatges went under the control of Padshaha of Bijapur who granted to "Piraji Ghatge Raje Deshmukh, Prant Kagal"³¹ as a Royal grant of Mandate in 1572 A.D. (Hijara 980).

A Farman then was granted by Hyder Ali Bin Mohumud Shaha, the Prime Minister of Aurangazeb to Amiral Umrao Vithoji Ghatge in 1664 or 1665 that is in Hijara 1073..³² The Ghatage family seems to be, thus old one and rose to distinction by valorous deeds. It was founded by one Bhanaji Ghatage Deshmukh of Kagal.

28. KAO, Kolhapur States Political and feudatory Branch of Kagal Senior File, No.227 P.S.

29. Lathe, A.B., - Memories of His Highness Shri Shahu Chhatrapati, Maharaja of Kolhapur, Vol.I; P.25.

30. Ibid, - P.25.

31. KAO, Feudatory Branch - Kagal Senior Register No.27 File 32, PP.1 to 269 Index of Appendices, P.7.

32. A) Ibid, - Prime Minister's Register; No.3 File No.47, P.13.
 B) Modak, B.P., and Vaze, D.G., - History of Kolhapur and Southern Maratha States- Vol.II(of) History of Bijapur Kingdom P.265.

who was in the service of Shahaji, the father of Great Shivaji. He encountered the forces of the Nizam Shahi Government and defeated Doodha Sarjerao Rajput and seized his horse and surja (the ornamental crest of the horse) whereupon Shahaji conferred on him (Bhanaji) the title "Sarjerao" which had been borne by all descendents of the Ghatage family.³³ Since then as the Ghatages joined the Maratha forces who were fighting for their independence from the Mughals, the grant of Kagal was confirmed by Shivaji the Great in 1674 upon the Ghatages.³⁴

In the year 1785, Balabai Akkasaheb, the sister of Shivaji II, was married to Vishwasrao Ghatage Sarjerao of Kagal. Thence[^] this occasion, the Ghatages of Kagal and the Chhatrapatis of Kolhapur renewed their blood relationship on various occasions by matrimonial alliances. And Balabaisaheb, the wife of Narayanrao Ghatage of Kagal, and the mother[^] of Shahu's real father, was the sister of Babasaheb Maharaj, the Chhatrapati of Kolhapur. It is therefore, evident that both the houses of Kolhapur and Kagal were on equal status and were Kshatriyas.

Great warriors and administrators were born in the Ghatage family of Kagal. Tuloji alias Sakharam, better known as Sarjerao Ghatage saved Kolhapur from the aggressive and destructive attacks of the Peshwa, through an alliance with Daulatrao Shinde, in

33. KAO, Kolhapur State, - Diwan Office Paper Known as No.873 to 898 P.37, of 28th March 1898, Kolhapur, also see - Garge, S.M., - Karveer Riyasatichi Kagadpatre, P.284.

34. KAO, Rumal No.27, File No.32, Appendices P.9.

an earlier alliance ~~with~~^{although} the Shindes had backed the Peshwas.³⁵ Bayajabai, then Sarjerao Ghatage's daughter was married to Daulatrao Shinde, the then chief of Gwalior. Sarjerao's son, Hindurao Ghatage earned a glorious title, Vajarat Ma-ab from the Chhatrapati of Kolhapur for his bravery he had exhibited while defending Kolhapur in the battle of Saigaon between the Patwardhangs and the Chhatrapati of Kolhapur. Afterwards Hindurao Ghatage accepted the post of Commander of Army in the court of Gwalior. And even today the memory of Hindurao Ghatage is revived at the sight of a ridge³⁶ near Delhi and a hospital³⁷ named after him in New Delhi.

ABASAHEB GHATAGE

However this house of Kagal was divided into two branches Kagal Senior and Kagal Junior in the year 1768. Here in the Kagal junior house, Shahu's real father, Sir Jayasingrao Abasaheb was born on March 12, 1857 and was the eldest son of Narayanrao Ghatage, the chief of Kagal Junior. Meanwhile the chief of Kagal Senior Hindurao Ghatage died without heir in 1856. His wife Parvatibai, therefore, adopted Govindrao alias Dajisaheb, a boy from the Kenwade house and renamed him as Sakharam Bapu. But to add to the tragedy of the Kagal Senior house, Sakharam Bapu also died at about twenty years of age in 1864 without an heir.

35. Modak, B.P., - Kolhapur Va Karnatak Prantatil Rajye Va Sansthana Yancha Itihas, Uttarardha Bhag I, P.116, Kolhapur 1925.

36. Hindurao Ridge at the east of Delhi.

37. Hindurao Hospital at New Delhi.

Naturally, Hindu customs prevail over the Hindus. To continue the Ghatage lineage, Sakharam's wife Sundarabai, adopted Dattajirao alias Abasaheb Ghatage from the Kagal Junior house and renamed him as Jayasingrao Abasaheb. Then, after coming to maturity³⁸ age, he assumed the full powers as the chief of Kagal senior in 1878 and became known within a short period as the strong and capable administrator.

SITUATION AT KOLHAPUR

On the death of Babasaheb Maharaj, Rajaram Maharaj, his adopted son was made Chhatrapati of Kolhapur. But as he was minor a new system of administration known as Agency Administration was introduced in Kolhapur State from 4th August 1866.³⁹ Accordingly the British political Agent actually started his rule over Kolhapur. However, it was realized that the people of Kolhapur were not content³⁹ and their grievances increased problems before the British. The Bombay Government took the note of that situation quite in time and in place of Agency Administration, Regency Administration (some sort of self-government) was introduced to please the people. And as pre-planned and proposed by the British Government, Abasaheb was appointed as the Regent, and presiding officer of the Regent's Council. The details of his appointment are revealed in a letter of

38. Malgaonkar, Manohar, - op.cit., P.558.

39. Modak, B.P., - Kolhapur Va Karnatak Prantacha Itihas (Marathi) PP.184-185.

Major H.N.Reeves, Political Agent, Kolhapur and South Maratha Country, which he wrote on ¹the 17th March 1882 to the Bombay Government. The letter runs as -

" I arrived (from Bombay) on the 14th instant (March). On the morning of the 15th visited the Ranees at the Palace, explained to them the arrangements proposed by Government for the introduction of the Regency in this state to be presided over by Abasaheb, Chief of Kagal, as Regent."⁴⁰ Abasaheb thus as the first Regent had taken over the charge of Kolhapur administration on 16th March 1882. The following words of his maiden speech as the Regent of Kolhapur will certainly help to know him.

"Kolhapur subjects have long been under the rule of the British Government and now his Excellency, Sir James Fergusson has given a native administration to us and has appointed me Regent. I look upon this as a very high honour done to me, I am at the same time keenly alive to the very heavy responsibilities which the office involves".⁴¹

Abasaheb was twentyfive when he became the Regent of Kolhapur in 1882 and remained in that capacity till his death on 20th March 1886. During that short span of his career as the Regent, he had established his complete hold over the court of Kolhapur and earned a good name. Besides as he had taken

40. NAI, New Delhi, - Bombay Index 1882, Foreign Deptt. File- The Maharaja of Kolhapur, his insanity and arrangement made for the Administration of Kolhapur N212 No.128 P.22.

41. NAI, New Delhi, - No.212 No.204 Regent's Reply. P.21.

pains to improve the administration in Kolhapur, a special honour of "a salute of Nine guns" was conferred upon him by the Government of India, on behalf of the Queen.⁴² A Resolution which throws light on the character of Abasaheb was also passed by the Bombay Government after his death to give a fitting tribute to his work as the Regent.

"His Excellency the Governor in Council has learnt with great sorrows that Jayasingrao Ghatage, Chief of Kagal and Regent of Kolhapur died of pneumonia on the evening of the 20th instant, at Kolhapur. By his death the Government of Bombay have lost a Chief of rare enlightenment. His public virtues were known beyond the limits of the territory which his prudent and liberal administration has made a pattern for neighbouring States, and in recording his deep sense of the public loss by the death of Abba Saheb, His Excellency in Council only expression to a sentiment which will be very widely felt both by the Late Regent's countrymen and in England".⁴³

Abasaheb Ghatage, was thus a wise politician and able administrator. Shahu Maharaj, in this way from both the houses of his mother and father, had a great lineage and noble heritage of royal traditions and benevolent administration.

42. Ibid., No.217, No.26 from the Govt. of India, P.24.

43. NAI, New Delhi, - Foreign Department Internal A. 1886 F.D. Nos.148-149, No.49, R.No.1824, dated Bombay Castle 29th March 1886, Extract from the Proceedings of the Govt. of Bombay Pol. Deptt.

SHAHU'S EARLY EDUCATION AND SELECTION FOR ADOPTION

Abasaheb, Shahu's real father, right from the childhood of his son, took keen interest to educate them properly. Yeshwant-rao, his eldest son, therefore, at the age of ten, completed the study course of Vernacular Std.IV and was acquainted with English. He was, at the same time, very nicely trained in riding, shooting and such other arts, essential for a Jahagirdar's son of his time.⁴⁴

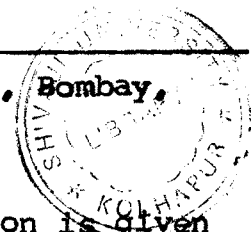
In the meanwhile, the death news of Shivaji IV, the Chhatrapati of Kolhapur was spread all over Maharashtra. Naturally as Shivaji IV could bear no children, the question of a heir to Kolhapur throne or Gadi became the immediate concern of the Bombay Government as well as of the Kolhapur Darbar. Major H.N.Reeves, Political Agent of Kolhapur and Southern Maratha countries, therefore, took the cognizance of the situation in Kolhapur and got permission from the Bombay Government to find out and select a suitable boy as an adoptee to the throne of Kolhapur Chhatrapatis. Under the circumstances after taking the consents of the queens, Sakwarbai saheb - the widow of Chhatrapati Rajaram and Anandibai Saheb, the widow of Shivaji IV. Major Reeves chose to request Abasaheb Ghatage, the chief of Kagal for his younger son - Bapusaheb "as that would be more in consonance with the requirements of the Shastras".⁴⁵

44. A) Vaidya, G.B., Balbodha (Marathi Magazine) P.27, Bombay, May, 1898.

B) RGAK, for 1884-85, P.14.

45. Latthe, A.B., HHSSM, Vol.I, P.24.

Generally among the Hindus, second or younger son is given in adoption if circumstances arise.



To continue the lineage, the Hindu couples, without a son used to adopt a suitable boy from other families of equal status. However, the British rule which wanted to grab the whole country by hook or crook, adopted during the viceroyalty of Lord Dalhousie, the "Doctrine of Lapse" to prevent the royal houses in India from adopting a boy from other families as their son. But from the time of Lord Canning's viceroyalty permissions were again granted to royal houses for legalizing heirarchy through adoption. Even then, adoptions in the royal houses were not possible without direct or indirect consent and choice of the British Government. Against this precedent, Major Reeves, the Political Agent of Kolhapur asked Abasaheb to give either of his sons. And Abasaheb suggested the name of his eldest son - Yashwantrao as he felt of his son, the most suitable for becoming a king. Besides, what Abasaheb conveniently put forth to convince the political Agent, as well as the concerned parties was a view that if the younger son would become the Chhatrapati of Kolhapur, the eldest would have to bear ultimately an inferior position as he was to remain simply a Feudatory chief - a Jahagirdar under the power of Kolhapur Chhatrapatis. And these views were appropriately held up and pressed in through a letter to Bombay Government written by H.N. Reeves in which he says -

"Abasaheb, the Regent is willing to allow either of his sons to be adopted by Anandibai Saheb, but prefers to give the eldest in adoption, if permitted by Government".⁴⁶ Further, in.

46. A) India office, Shahu correspondence, Letter of Jan.12,1884.

B) Quoted from the Shahu Gaurava Granth, edited by P.B. Salunkhe, P.18, Bombay, 1976.

same letter, the stand, as to why Yashwantrao was more suitable than Bapusaheb was explained as follows - "No one, it will be admitted knows the abilities, qualifications and character of his (Abasaheb's) sons so well as the Regent himself and it is because he truly and conscientiously believes that the eldest will be the best Raja, that he prefers to give him in adoption. The eldest boy, Abasaheb tells me, is considerate, obedient and generous with a fine sensitive nature. While fond of riding and amusements he is diligent at his lessons, has plenty of applications and shows natural talent. The second son is, so his father says, of an absterinate and rather hard nature, not kind and considerate like his brother, quick at his strides when he chooses to work and with better natural ability than his brother. He too is fond of games, riding etc. In short as Abasaheb said of this yesterday - "If my youngest boy turns out well, he will turn out very well indeed, but if not he will be very bad and very difficult to manage."⁴⁷

The Government of Bombay, it seems thought over these views thoroughly and communicated its opinion to the Government of India upholding the views of political Agent in the following words -

" The Governor in council, therefore, thinks that there is no sufficient reason why as recommended by his father, the one should not be chosen who appears to be likely to prove the better ruler, and whose greater age will enable the earlier

47. Salunkhe, P.B., (Edr.), - Shahu Gaurav Granth P. 121.

gratification of the desire of the people of Kolhapur to be again ruled over by a sovereign in full possession of the authority attaching to his position".⁴⁸ Thus, after this much muddling only, Yashwantrao's selection for adoption to the Kolhapur Gadi became sure and certain.

ADOPTION

Anandibaisaheb, the widow of Shivaji IV, received consent and approval for her plan of taking Yashwantrao in adoption from the Bombay Government on February 22, 1884. And with its pomp and glory the adoption and thereafter installation ceremonies were celebrated according to Hindu customs⁴⁹ on the 17th March, 1884. However, a letter of H.N.Reeves of the July 25, 1884, written to the Chief Secretary to Government of Bombay, throws light on the manner and question of selecting Yashwantrao for that great honour and the aftermath arrangements in the Kolhapur Darbar. The main theme in the letter is expressed as -

"As the late Raja had no children, Their Highnesses, the Ranees of Kolhapur with the approbation of Government selected Yashwantrao alias Babasaheb, the eldest son of the Chief of Kagal to fill the vacant throne and accordingly on the 17th March, 1884, exactly two years after the constitution of the Regency, he was adopted by Their Highness Anandibaisaheb as son and heir to her

48. Ibid, - P.19.

49. Patil, Balasaheb, -(Edr.) Satyawadi Special Issue "Rajarshi Shahu Chhatrapati" 1974, reprint of its special issue of 1928, P. 11.

deceased husband and ascended the Gadi of Kolhapur under the style and title of Shahu Chhatrapati Maharaj. The Government of this State is still continued by a Regency administration on behalf of the minor Raja".⁵⁰

Thus the adoption of Shahu was in accordance with the will of the members in the house of Chhatrapati as well as of the British authorities. And no question arose of the ambition of Abasaheb Ghatage for making his son the Chhatrapati. It is to be remembered here that people did not want a minor king. Even persons like Lokmanya Tilak, had also opined after the death of Chhatrapati Shivaji IV the need of a good boy, having a good physique, sound health and majority age,⁵¹ as an adoptee to the Kolhapur Chhatrapatis. But it is wonder that Lokmanya was changed at the adoption ceremony of Shahu. And forgetting his earlier views about the selection of a boy as an adoptee to the Kolhapur house, he prayed God for minor Shahu's successful future career.⁵²

EDUCATION AFTER ADOPTION

Shahu, thus, became the Chhatrapati of Kolhapur. But his minority age made him still to stay with and under the guardianship of his own father. Thereafter arrangements were made to

50. RGAK, for 1883-84, P.I.

51. Tilak, B.G. (Edr) - Kesari January 22, 1884 - An Obituary Article on the life of Shivaji IV.

52. Ibid, - Kesari, March 17, 1884.

give him the best possible education in order to fit him in the responsible position to which he had been raised.⁵³ Soon after in consultation with the Political Agent and Bombay Government P.S.V. Fitz Gerald, the Assistant to the Political Agent and Krishnaji Bhikaji Gokhale, the personal secretary and the old teacher of Abasaheb himself, were appointed as the guardian and tutor respectively from 29th August and 17th September, 1884.⁵⁴

A study report submitted by Mr. Fitz Gerald about the educational progress of the Maharaja just after six months period gives the following information.

"The Maharaja is now learning all the subjects of the 2nd standard sanctioned by the Department of Public Instructions for Anglo Vernacular schools -

" He understands very fairly all that he reads -

" He has learnt the history of India as far as the time of Warren Hastings. He has learnt the detailed geography of Asia and India and has a fairly good knowledge of the elementary geography of the world and the geography of Europe, its political divisions, capital cities and so forth.

" He has learnt the whole of "Bhashantar Pathamala" Part I of 55 pages.

" His spelling is good".⁵⁵

53. Latthe A.B.,- HHSSM, Vol. I, P.32

54. RGAK., for 1884-85, P.14.

55. Ibid..

The report thus gave details of subjectwise progress alongwith the daily time table of the student - Maharaja and assigned importance to Maharaja's getting up at 5-30 A.M. regularly and to follow his routine by starting dump-bell exercises. At the end, Fitz Gerald remarked of the Maharaja as pain taking and anxious to learn.

Abasaheb Ghatage, father of Shahu, was a man of progressive ideas and earlier felt to send up his sons for education to England. But his personal tour to that country from 17th September to 25th December 1885, brought a change in his views and the young Maharaja alongwith his brother Bapusaheb Ghatage, uncle Bapusaheb alias Kakasaheb Ghatage, and a companion, Dattajirao Ingale were sent on December 31, 1885 for education to Rajkumar College,⁵⁶ Rajkot. And even when a period of three months was not completed, young Shahu got on 19th March 1885, a news of his father's serious illness. Immediately he left for Kolhapur, and reached on 22nd, but alas ! Prior to his arrival, Abasaheb died on 20th March.

56. The Rajkumar College at Rajkot was established in 1870 "for the education of the Chiefs and noble families of Kathiwar. This was the first institution of its kind and thought, styled with the appellation of a college, it was merely a school intended to teach upto the entrance or matriculation standard of any University". This college, had been practically recognised as the Chief's College for the chiefs and Sardars of the entire Bombay Presidency. In later period, colleges of such types were opened at Ajmer, Indore and Lahore respectively in 1872, 1881 and 1886 A.D. And the total number of such colleges remained only four even after the First World War. See Abhyankar, G.R., - Problem of Indian States, P. 392.

Sad and so grieved in the loss of his father, Shahu at an early age of twelve, might have looked upon this world as useless. However after some days his studies at Rajkot were resumed again. And, inspite of this fact, Macnaghten, the principal of the Rajkumar College remarked in the first year's progress report of Shahu and his companions as "They are all good promising boys."⁵⁷

An extract from a letter, of K.B.Gokhale, who was accompanied Shahu to Rajkot as a private tutor, gives a correct information regarding the student life of Shahu at Rajkot as - "His Highness and his companions have been working very hard since they came here, they have to study eight hours a day". And while successfully carrying out his regular studies, the tutor told, Shahu "did much by way of drill, gymnastics, riding, shooting and similar outdoor sports - Riding and Shikar formed his most favoured pastime on Sundays".⁵⁸

In the same letter, it is told that on the Prize Distribution Day, Principal Macnaghten said in praising tone that "the Maharaja and his companions have gained special commendations from the examiners" as they had fairly done good in the annual examination. After all as Gokhale reported, the study of Maharaja was quite good and he "obtained more than one-third of the full marks assigned to each subject" and secured

57. RGAK., for 1885-86, P. 73.

58. Latthe, A.B., - Op.cit. vol. I, P.39.

"more than 60% of the marks assigned to all the subjects".⁵⁹

At Rajkot Shahu remained for about four and half years that is from January 1885 to the end of April 1889, except with occasional breaks and vacations. Kakasaheb Ghatage told in 1922, after Shahu's death that the Maharaja was very much popular among all the students at Rajkumar College and "Though his position was highest among all the chiefs, he never behaved indifferently".⁶⁰

The year 1889, brought a change in the course and study pattern of Shahu Maharaja, because in that year W.Lee Warner, the Secretary to Government of Bombay, got approval from the Government of India for S.M.Fraser's appointment as the guardian and tutor of Maharaja.⁶¹

Stuart M.Fraser was a graduate of Oxford University and prior taking over this new charge, had served as the assistant Collector and magistrate at Nasik and Political Agent for the Dangs and Surgana for nearly four years. He, thus entered upon his duties on the 22nd May 1889 at Kolhapur and took the Raja and his companions to Dharwar where arrangement were made for their stay and further education.

The first Term report of Fraser about the progress of Shahu at Dharwar though tells that in comparison to his other

59. a) Ibid., P. 40 b) RGAR., for 1885-86, P. 66.

60. KAO, S.D.R.No.1 - Information as received from the chief of Kagal Jr.R.272 (This file is wrongly indexed in the rumal consisting papers from 1801 to 1890 instead of 1922-23).

61. NAI., New Delhi : Index to Foreign Deptt., Bombay (Internal B) File R-N 24849.No.1117 of 1889 dated 12th Feb.details on PP.9 to 12 (Appendix).

companions, his study was not good, but the second term's report dated April 11, 1890, gives quite encouraging remarks about him^{as}-

"His common sense has particularly appeared in the elementary Political Economy, they (the Kumars - Shahu and his companions) are now learning, a subject in which he (the Raja) is better than the rest. His English conversation has distinctly improved, both in correctness and in ease, and will continue to improve as he loses the shyness which, with strangers prevents his doing himself justice".⁶² Further the teacher writes in the same report that "In disposition, His Highness who, inspite of his size is still quite a boy, is healthy minded, open, generous and truthful. He is totally free from bumptiousness and I have seen many little instances of unselfishness and thoughtfulness on his part which show that he is as good-natured as he looks".

In the later reports of S.M.Fraser it is seen that a considerable progress was made by Shahu. The report of May 31, 1893 gives the correct picture of him. It reads-

" As in former years I have much pleasure in recording that His Highness is a willing student and never shirks his work, which is the more creditable as he cannot be said to be naturally fond of books. His command of English both in speaking, reading and to a less degree in composition had advanced considerably and he had made great strides in general information and brightness, while beginning to show that interest in serious affairs, which

62. a) RGAK., for the year 1890-91, consecutive Enclosure No.I, Pp.1-2.

b) Latthe,A.B., - opcit., Vol.I, P.46.

would be expressed in one who is growing now from a boy into a young man.⁶³ Further the Report confidently tells that the Maharaja "though young does not lack the faculty of self-possession in public speaking, which is so valuable to one who occupies a high position". And as to his disposition and general conduct the teacher continued, "I have only the highest praise, and must record both his strictness of life and the honourable way in which he has kept a certain promise connected with his marriage, whereby he has set a valuable example which is being followed not only by his brothers, but, I am informed by other young Marathas connected with him". So great was, the influence of young Shahu on his brother and companions for which an I.C.S. officer like S.M.Fraser had always best regards. Of course, the points of accusation that Shahu was not a clever student or that he was very shy, had no sound proof and seems to be inconsistent with facts. Latthe had also accepted this truth when he drew the following inference -

"To those who knew the exceptionally strong mental calibre of His Highness as evidenced by the varied activities of his later life, there complains about untidiness, careless habits or shyness in the company of Europeans may appear somewhat incongruous with his true nature."⁶⁴ And the shyness of Shahu or his tendency to avoid contacts, might be a story of half truth.

63. RGAK., - for 1892-93, Consecutive Encloser No.1 No.63 of 1893, Pp.4-5.

64. Latthe,A.B.- Op.cit. Vol. 1, P. 155.

As Latthe told again, "He was never fond of the formalities of European social life and avoided accepting invitations to stay with European friends or even to attend public dinners".⁶⁵ This statement of Latthe as well as about the initial shyness of Shahu that Fraser had pointed out might not be without reasons. The British dominance since 1844 was so much in Kolhapur State. The memories regarding the tragedies of earlier Chhatrapatis - Rajaram Maharaj died at Florence and Shivaji IV murdered at Ahmednagar were still alive. Naturally Shahu might have been suspicious and thus disliked moving freely in the company of the Europeans. This would have been again probably his cautiousness rather than shyness. And after Abasaheb's death, as Shahu had not only his own responsibility, but of his younger brother Bapusaheb also, he might have made this diplomatic move.

With the beginning of the first term in 1891, new subjects of Law and Elementary Science were introduced in the study course of Shahu. And as the teacher reported, he had made a great general progress during that year.⁶⁶ By this time, Shahu was about seventeen years old and could have gained much more confidence. The stories of the life history of Shivaji the Great, such as the seizure of Torana at the age of sixteen, the episode of Afzal Khan, the attack on Shahista Khan, the great escape of Agra etc. might have richly influenced him. The growing age, thus

65. Ibid..

66. Latthe, A.B., Op.cit., Vol.I, pp. 54-55.
RGAK., for 1891-92 Consecutive Enclosure No.I, P.2).

would have helped Shahu to go on with his own way. In 1893, after the retirement of K.B.Gokhale, Raghunath Vyankoji Sabnis⁶⁷ was appointed as the tutor of Shahu. This was the last year of his education and training. Hence, the report submitted by S.M. Fraser in relation to Shahu's progress is important. It reveals the manner in which he was prepared to deal with the actual administration of Kolhapur. The extracts of the report are as follows :

" With regard to the subjects studied by High Highness and his brother during the past year, the intention has been to give them some knowledge of general principles of Government and legislation and of the more important laws regulating the chief branches of administration. With this object, I have delivered to them lectures on jurisprudence and legislation particularly in connection with Indian Political Law and they have studied the treaties which bind the Kolhapur State and the historical events which gave rise to them."⁶⁸

Particularly, again Fraser had mentioned that Shahu Maharaja alongwith his brother was acquainted with the village and district police system and a summary of the Penal and Criminal Procedure Codes also. He has^x also made to attend the court of the Chief Judge, take down the evidence of selected criminal cases under trial. Similarly lessons were given in relation to

67. Mr.R.V.Sabnis was an M.A. of Bombay University.

68. a) Latthe,A.B., Op.cit. vol.I, P.79-

b) RGAK, - for 1893-94 Consecutive Enclosure No.1, P.I.

the old and existing system of land revenue administration with an account of "Alienation Settlement" in his State. In addition to that practical and theoretical knowledge was given pertaining to the system of village revenue accounts and the accounts kept in the Khasagi Department. Keer, a modern biographer of Shahu Maharaj, has commented in appreciation of this education as "really a good type of education and training for a ruler."⁶⁹

The total period of Maharaja's education and training after adoption, thus consist of one year and some months under Mr. Fitz Gerald, about four and half years at Rajkumar College and about four years at Dharwar under S.M.Fraser. Total number of years that he went under education and training including pre-adoption period comes to little more than thirteen. At the time of accession to full powers, thus, Shahu's educational attainments were equal to that of a graduation level.

KNOWLEDGE THROUGH TOURS

To facilitate the young Maharaja, acquiring knowledge of various parts of India and her people three major tours - two in the North and one in the South were arranged. The first of these tours began on 16th November 1890 when he was more than sixteen years old and able to grasp what he was to see and observe. During this tour, his intimate friend Bhausingaji also accompanied along with his brother Bapusaheb and other companions in Kolhapur.

69. Keer, Dhananjay, - Shahu Chhatrapati, P. 34.

In this tour, great centres of pilgrimage like Nasik, Allahabad and great ^Simportant cities like Delhi, Jabalpur, Jaipur, Ajmer, Calcutta, Darjeeling, Lucknow, Agra and others were shown to him. At Nasik, (situation gave him the first shock) for the Brahmin priests of two rival groups claimed the honour and profit of his signature. The compound of his bungalow was literally ^{be} set by the swarms of hungry Bhikshukas or religious beggars.⁷⁰ At Allahabad, an unknown family of the Brahmins claiming to be the priest of the Chhatrapatis pounced upon the Maharaja at the Railway station to get the maximum amount by the way of Bhikshuki. And when he was required to bathe at the Manakarnika well the foulest and holiest water of all at Benaras, he flatly refused without caring its effects on the priest. It is, therefore, symbolic to see the revolutionary stand regarding the foul practices the Maharaja had in his mind since quite early days.

Then the Taj of Agra and Mughal palaces at Fatehpur Sikri forced Shahu to admire the art and architecture they bore. While at Delhi he was more influenced by the Hindurao Ghatage Ridge and the Flag Tower near Delhi.⁷¹ In this short tour of forty-five days from 16th November to 30th December 1890, Shahu and his party travelled over 4,899 miles and gained some idea of the size of India and the variety of her people. The places seen had each helped to stock him with pictures of scenery,

70. a) RGAK, for 1890-91, Consecutive Enclosure No.I.
b) Latthe, A.B., Op.cit. vol.I, P.48

71. This Hindurao Ghatage was the great grand-father of Shahu from the line of his natural father.

buildings and events of history in a way that reading never could have done.

The second tour, commenced on the 5th November 1891 from Kolhapur and the party visited Bijapur, Hyderabad, Madras, Pond~~e~~cherry, Tanjore, Tutⁱ Cochin, Colombo, Cand~~dy~~ and Newara Eliya. It is easy to understand for Indians ^{that} what young Shahu might have felt after seeing the major capitals of the British Empire like Bombay, Calcutta and Madras. [How could have been happy this heir of Shivaji the great, to see glorious British power ? So to grasp Shahu correctly, therefore a pen of Indian tutor was required than the one an I.C.S. Officer like Mr. Fraser used.

In this tour, Tanjore attracted Shahu very much for the rulers of Tanjore were none else but the Bhosale^s of his ancestor's branch and history was to remind him, the glorious past and heroic deeds of the Marathas. While in Ceylon, what an Indian could remember except the noble principles of Buddhism and the name of great emperor Ashoka, the Great ? But how could be there a reference in Fraser's report about the inner feelings and thoughts of young Maharaja in regard to great heritage of his mother land? And how could Shahu forget the tragedy of his two predecessors and the weight of the hanging sword of the British protection over his head and how could he tell all what he felt ?

On the way back to Kolhapur, Shahu had an opportunity to visit Bangalore and Mysore, hence the revival of memory of Shahaji

the father of Shivaji the Great.

The last of tours started from Kolhapur on the 28th October 1892 along with his brother Bapusaheb and Bhausingji, the Maharaja of Bhavanagar. This time Shahu was married and as his queen was the daughter of Baroda. The route was fixed to visit Sind and the Punjab via Baroda. As a result at Baroda he was welcomed in grand manner by the Gaikwads. At Jodhapur Sir Jaswant Singh, the head of the celebrated Rathor clan received him. After visiting Mathura and other holy places, the town Sasaram, the seat of Sher Shaha Suri was also visited and the party turned to Amritsar. Onward that the places like Multan, Shah Derra, etc. gave knowledge of the frontier people in India. Karachi was then the place of special interest. Here in Karachi, Chimasaheb, the younger brother of Shivaji III alias Babasaheb Maharaj and maternal uncle of Abasaheb Ghatage was kept in jail. Chimasaheb was charged with the revolt in Kolhapur State in 1857 and deported from Kolhapur in the same year to put him in jail in Karachi till his death in 1870.⁷² What an immortal lesson could give a mortal man better than Chimasaheb, the hero of Kolhapur did, through the vision of his tomb in Karachi ?

Three tours thus taught Shahu, the Chhatrapati of Kolhapur to know vast and varied lands and people of India, the noble ideals of Buddha and Ashoka, spirit of Hinduism and in short

72. Patil, Surjerao, - Chimasaheb Bhosale, P. 35.

the history of India from ancient to his times. Crowdy thoughts in mind, contradictions in philosophies and ideas, varied problems of the British dominance would certainly have disturbed the young Maharaja, and these tours definitely would have made him to know thoroughly the variety of people, religions, customs and traditions that India had from early times.

Shahu's tour in the early days of 1894, in the Kolhapur State had a special significance. Because since the last forty years no Chhatrapati was seen by the masses. So, both of them - the masses as well as Shahu, their new king - got an opportunity to see each other.

MARRIAGE AND MARRIED LIFE

Shahu's marriage took place at Baroda, on the 1st April 1891, when he was around seventeen years and his wife Laxmibai Saheb eleven years and three months old. Laxmibai's father Meherban Gunajirao Khanvilkar of Baroda, was closely related to the Gaikwad's of Baroda, as the grandfather of Laxmibaisaheb was married the daughter of His Highness Sayajirao (Senior), Gaikwad. The Khanvilkars as were previously connected by ties of blood with the Chhatrapatis of Satara,⁷³ the marriage of Shahu and Laxmibaisaheb had again reunited the highly aristocratic families of the Chhatrapatis and the Khanvilkars.

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73. Latthe, A.B., Op.cit. Vol. I, P.53.

Marriage ceremony and receptions were over according to royal customs and Hindu traditions. The husband and wife, even though were rather young to consume their marriage, Hindu customs encouraged such things even before the days of puberty. And the persons in a royal family even if of a minor could get encouragement and sanction for such matters. To Shahu, but there was a hindrance, as his father Abasaheb Ghatage wished on his death bed that his son's marriage could not be celebrated till the latter became "over eighteen years of age".<sup>74</sup> And what the loving father like Abasaheb Ghatage wanted to impress upon his son was conveyed through a letter by Lee Warner, the esteemed friend of Abasaheb as follows -

" I am writing to you on a subject which makes it necessary for me to remind you (even after marriage) that I was with your lamented father just as he passed away, and received his dying wishes regarding you". Further after explaining his close association with Abasaheb and the importance of writing that letter from London even after leaving India for ever, Lee Warner as an elderly man warned Shahu - "It was your father's great desire that you should not marry until your wife was old enough to bear children if it pleased God to give to you them, without injury to her health".<sup>75</sup> And it had gone wonderfully with Shahu that at the wrong age of puberty he had strictly followed the path of self-control and self-denial.<sup>76</sup>

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74. Ibid, P.56

75. KAO - SDR., No.2, Index Lo.No. R-I.

76. This reference is very important while taking into account the future course of Shahu's life.

Shahu's early life ~~was~~ was much restricted and disciplined. His time-table of daily routine was just as a clock and was carried out as if it was his natural way of life. After marriage ceremonies were over, he resumed his studies under S.M.Fraser. Laxmibaisaheb, his wife was also made to learn under <sup>x</sup>separate arrangements in accordance with the palacial traditions.

In 1891, meanwhile a plan was prepared by the Bombay Government to send Shahu to England for further studies. But Shahu himself through his first diplomatic letter, very prudently convinced the Bombay Governor, Lord Harris, the necessity of postponing the England <sup>x</sup>visit and the utility of Shahu's not leaving Kolhapur also. <sup>77</sup>

After sometimes, on the 10th of March 1894, the first issue of Shahu, a female child, Radhabai alias, Akkasaheb Maharaj was born. Ambai alias Akkasaheb was then born in the following year on May 23, but died shortly after. Rajaram Maharaj, who ruled Kolhapur as the heir and successor of Shahu was born on 31st July 1897. On the birth of Rajaram Maharaj, the Kolhapur people became so much <sup>y</sup>jubilant and happy. This was simply because after the death of Babasaheb Maharaja's children in <sup>z</sup>an early infancy at <sup>v</sup>about the time of 1850, no child was seen playing at the Royal Palace. A birth of male child is always held in

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77. KAO, - SDR No.2, R.285. Appendix, Letter to Lord Harris, the Governor of Bombay dated July 7, 1892.

high esteem and as a great fortune by the Hindus. The importance again was multiplied if such a child was born in the royal house. And for the Indian Princes under the British, a birth of a male child was a must, for if they could get no natural heir to their Kingdoms, British were either to apply the principle of lapse in respect of that state or create some troubles. Rajaram's birth, therefore, was fortunate event in the Kolhapur State.

Prince Shivaji, the second son and the last child of Shahu was born on the 15th April 1899 A.D.

To Shahu, from the day he took over the full charge of his State Administration, difficult tasks and unseen problems of serious nature harassed much. Especially the work of upliftment of the masses, created unbearable situation for him. But he had on his own espoused the cause of social upliftment and never cared of the clouds his enemies created. And in those circumstances also he was so keen and alive to his home. He took very keen interest in the study, training and future career of his children. Although he was a king, as a father of a daughter, he had a great anxiety about the marriage of his daughter. Radhabai alias Akka Saheb Maharaj, his only daughter was bethrothed to His Highness Shri Tukojirao Powar (Paur) the Maharaja of Dewas in 1904. However when negotiations were held to fix up the date of marriage, Shahu deferred and tried to postpone the date of marriage for avoiding the evils of child marriage,<sup>78</sup> as his daughter was

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78. Latthe, A.B., - Op.cit. Vol. I., P. 292.

only about nine years old. Then on March 21, 1908 after her attaining the age of fourteen, the marriage was celebrated at the Bhavani Mandap - old palace Kolhapur in the grand pandal specially erected to suit royal grandeur.

Life without education creates hollowness to space unlimited difficulties. A father's heart who knows the value of education, hence takes precautions to educate his children in accordance with the needs of time. Shahu's times were under drastic change. Workers and farmers were coming to senses knowing their importance in the life of a nation. Commoners were becoming conscious of their needs and rights. The struggle for India's freedom was intensively growing. And the British position because of that struggle and the First World War had become shaky. Whether Shahu had realised this or thought in a different manner, had no substantial evidence. But the education and training which he gave to his sons certainly reveal that the Chhatrapati of Kolhapur was quite aware of the end of Princely States in India.

At the beginning, the Marathi teachers were engaged to coach the Yuvaraj Rajaram and Prince Shivaji. Then instead of sending the Princes to Rajkot, he put his sons under the care of Irwin, a Ph.D. scholar and his wife Mrs. Irwin to enhance their further studies. And even after Irwin's untimely death, the entire responsibility was vested upon Mrs. Irwin.

In 1912, the Princes were sent to England. Shahu then used to write from India to Mrs. Irwin that his sons first be taught to



write and speak correct English and stressed a point that education of his sons must be practical. Rajaram, therefore was sent to Agriculture class and Shivaji to Carpentry.<sup>79</sup>

The Princes returned to India in October 1915. Immediately Shahu thought of them to be acquainted with Indian life and religion.<sup>80</sup> Both of the Princes so<sup>7</sup> were admitted to the Irwin Christian College of Allahabad for studying agriculture and allied subjects. After the completion of Allahabad training both of the Princes were engaged in the know-how of the principles and practice of the actual administration of Kolhapur. In addition to that Prince Shivaji was assigned to an independent business enterprise also.

#### MARRIAGES OF SONS

Sayajirao Gaikwad, the chief of Baroda was pushing his idea of arranging marriage of Indumati, the daughter of Fattesingrao Gaikwad, with Prince Rajaram. Here we find Shahu, a man of modern views. He therefore, proposed that only after seeing and approving of the girl by his son Rajaram, the matters would be settled. We see Shahu thus giving importance to his son's views and desire.

In the meanwhile, the marriage of younger prince Shivaji was arranged with Miss Jamunakka (the inborn queen of beauty),

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79. KAO, - SDR, for 1912 - R.No.235.

80. Latthe, A.B., - Op.cit., vol.II, P.396.

the daughter of Jagtap of Saswad in Poona district. This Jamuna-kka was renamed as Indumati Ranisaheb. But it was so sad that Prince Shivaji the most promising benevolent Prince died on June 12, 1918, leaving Indumati Ranisaheb to die on 1975 after living 57 years of widowhood.

The death of Prince Shivaji was great shock to Shahu and it was said that the grief of his fatherly heart was ended only in 1922 along with his own death.

Prince Rajaram's marriage with Indumati, the daughter of Fattesingrao Gaikwad was celebrated in 1918 and this Indumati, after marriage was renamed as Tarabaisaheb. This<sup>81</sup> Tarabaisaheb was proud of her royal heritage of Kolhapur and forced the free India Government to maintain as before the Maratha flag of saffron colour on the tower of Old Palace in Kolhapur.

#### PRE-INSTALLATION WORKS

The first and foremost event in Shahu's life and career as the Chhatrapati of Kolhapur was his handsome act of donating Rs.10,000/- and Rs.5,000/- respectively to Fergusson College and Poona Girls School in Poona in the year 1884.<sup>82</sup> Shahu's career thus began with this act of contributing first to the cause of education. Then for the first time he alongwith his adoptive mother, Anandibai Saheb and grandmother Sakvarbai Saheb visited

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81. This<sup>\*</sup> Tarabai also ruled Kolhapur from 1940 to March 1947 and died in 1953 at Kolhapur.

82. RGAK., for 1884-85, P.13; The History of Deccan Education Society, Poona, P.158.

Mahabaleshwar in May 1884. There he got himself acquainted with the Governor of Bombay, Reay and other English gentlemen and ladies.

In the second year of his royal career, Shahu received the greatest shock of his natural father's death in 1886. It was during that period a grave atmosphere prevailed over Kolhapur but his education at Rajkot made him to stay far away from Kolhapur. While then back in Kolhapur on vacation in 1887, in the Jubilee Celebration of the Queen Victoria's Reign. Shahu for the first time was seen by his State subjects taking initiative. The second public function that Shahu attracted the Kolhapur public was the ceremony of throbing the First sod of the Kolhapur State Railway on 3rd May 1888. The maiden speech which he had made on that occasion was clearly of suggestive nature of the future prudent career of the Maharaja. He began his speech with the words - "You will not expect from me anything beyond the few words which it has been suggested to me to say".<sup>83</sup>

During the cold weather, while on holidays at Kolhapur Shahu with his friend Bhaysingji<sup>84</sup> went to Poona to pay their respects to Prince Albert Victor. In the function held at Poona in honour of Prince Albert, no other king or a Prince from the Deccan, but Shahu alone was received in formal Darbar.

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83. RGAK, for the year 1888-89, P.3.

84. Bhavasingji was the Prince of Bhavnagar in Gujrat.

In February 1890, as usual there was an annual Horse and Cattle Fair at Chinchani. This fair was supposed to be the biggest one of its kind in the Kolhapur and Southern Maratha country. Here also Shahu and his friend Bhavsingaji by their presence increased enthusiasm of the masses.

#### INSTALLATION

Shahu Maharaja was invested with the full power of his State on the Second day of April 1894, when he was around twenty years. The ceremony of his accession to power was of historic importance due to the fact that after a gap of nearly seventy years, the actual rule of the Chhatrapati was to be seen in the Kolhapur State. Many native chiefs and V.I.P.'s of the Indian and foreign origin remained present at the Darbar held in the New Palace of Kolhapur to grace the occasion. Lord Harris, the Governor of Bombay, had specially gone for Investiture Darbar. The proceedings of the ceremony were opened with the opening speech of Lord Harris. After pointing out in his opening speech the circumstances in which Shahu was brought up and educated, and how ultimately made to rule his State, the Governor advised the New Chhatrapati, "to rule and direct his acts that they would earn him the greatest reward of a wise ruler, the respects and the affection of a contented people."<sup>85</sup>

Shahu Maharaj, after receiving the charge of Kolhapur admi-

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85. RGAK., for 1894-95, P. 5.

-nistration from the Governor Harris issued the proclamation to the people.<sup>86</sup>

"It is our earnest desire that our subjects should always be happy and contented that their welfare should increase from day-to-day that our State should go on prospering in all respects. In promoting this object we rely on the most loyal and hearty co-operation of our Jahagirdars, Relatives, Sardars, Mankaris, Inamdars, Kamdars, Mercantile classes of all ranks and all other subjects. We invoke with undivided affection, the blessings of the Ruler of the Universe, the highest spirit on our career, commenced this day that it may last and prove beneficial".

Shahu Chhatrapati ruled Kolhapur for about twenty years - from 2nd April 1894 to the 6th May 1922. During all these years he was primarily concerned to the State business. Besides, he added to his duties, the voluntary responsibility of social upliftments.

From the first year of Shahu's royal career, the people in Kolhapur State as well as almost all the people in Marathi land looked upon him as their Chhatrapati. The Poona Sarwajanik Sabha, the Premier Political Institution of the Deccan in those days also felt proud in arranging a grand welcome function at Poona, G.K.Gokhale, the prominent member of the Sarvajanik Sabha, read out his welcome address, appealed to Shahu Majaraja as -

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86. Ibid, - P. 7.

" Your Highness's first and foremost duty is necessarily and beyond all doubt to secure the progress and happiness of your own subjects. But the promotion of the welfare of our common country in general and of the Maharashtra in particular is also a duty devolving upon your Highness, owes to the people of your own State."<sup>87</sup> True to these hopes of Gokhale, Shahu Maharaja had moved restlessly to upgrade the status of commoners in the whole of Maharashtra and outside of it also."

#### HONOURS AND TITLES

In 1895, the restrictions in criminal powers of Shahu Maharaja, in regard to having the right of granting capital punishments were removed.<sup>88</sup> Prior to that on January 1, 1895, Queen Victoria marked her appreciation of Shahu's position and good work by conferring upon him the G.C.S.I.<sup>89</sup> and the ceremony of investing with the insignia of his Order took place on 18th September of the same year.

The Kolhapur Chhatrapatis were previously called as the Maharajas but instead of that great title they were simply called as the Rajas from 1844.<sup>90</sup> However because of Shahu's efforts

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87. Quarterly Journal of Sarvajanic Sabha, Oct.18,1894, P.27.  
See Latthe,A.B.,- Op.Cit. Vol. I PP.105-106.

88. Under Article of 7 of the revised Agreement of 1862 between the British Government and the Kolhapur State, sentences of death were to be reported to the Bombay Government for confirmation. Now that restriction was removed. See KAO, SDR No.347.

89. A Knight Grand Commander of the Most Exalted Order of the Star of India. G.C.S.I.

90. Malgaonkar, Manohar, - Op.cit., P. 347.

and good work, Queen Victoria conferred upon him the title of "Maharaja" as a hereditary distinction on May 24, 1900 A.D.

7. The year 1900 A.D. again was witnessed in Kolhapur as a mark of the beginning of Brahmin, Non-Brahmin feud. The famous Vedokta Episode of this year kept Shahu Maharaja and Lokmanya Tilak tightly bound into two different opposite camps. In 1901, the first of the Boarding Houses, the Victoria Maratha Boarding House was started in Kolhapur.

In the year 1902, Shahu was invited to England on the occasion of the coronation of Edward VII. Meanwhile before his voyage to England, on January 1, 1902, he was invested with the insignia of G.C.V.O. by the Duke of Cannaught when the Delhi Darbar was held by Lord Curzon. Then in his stay in England he was honoured by the old University of Cambridge, conferring upon him the Honorary Degree of LL.D. on the 10th June 1902, as a mark of that University's best regards for his interest in education and culture.<sup>91</sup> The Royal Agricultural Society of England at its annual meetings honoured Shahu by making him an honorary Member of their Society. On 26th July 1902, on his 28th birthday, Shahu Maharaja issued from England, the most sensational Resolution about the 50% reservations of services in the Kolhapur State Services for the backward class people. The year 1903 was marked with the appreciation of Shahu's administration by Bombay Government through their withdrawal from the exercise of the residuary

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91. Latthe, A.B., - Op.cit., Vol. I, P. 213;  
RGAK., for 1902-03, P. I.

criminal jurisdiction in the feudatory Jahagirs which had been reserved by British Government by Article 8 of the Agreement of 1862.<sup>92</sup>

The Kolhapur Maharaja was entitled to a salute of 19 guns and held a Sanad of adoption. The Salute of Shahu Maharaja was increased by 2 guns and was made of 21 guns from the 1st of January 1909 as personal honour.<sup>93</sup> And at the Great Imperial darbar held at Delhi on the 12th December 1911, in honour of the King Emperor, George V, one more title "G.C.I.E." was conferred on Shahu Maharaj. Thus he ~~xxx~~ acquired great honours and titles and proved as an able administrator and efficient as well as capable ruler.

However the real honours and titles that he received from the natives - specially from the majority of the people in India were greater and ever lasting. During the period from the end of the First World War to the death of Shahu, everywhere in Maharashtra and outside of it, he was held as the greatest hero of his times by the masses and down trodden people. The Marathas in Maharashtra held him their sole leader. Rightly, therefore, he was honoured by them in 1917 offering to him the Presidentship of the All India Maratha Education Conference of Khamgaon<sup>94</sup> in Madhya Pradesh. In 1918, at the Arya Dharma Conference at Navsari in Gujrat, Shahu Maharaj was gracefully requested to preside and

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92. See Agreement Between the British and Kolhapur State, P.24.

93. RGAK, for 1908-1909, P.1.

94. Since the Reorganisation of States in 1956, Khamgaon in M.P. is in Maharashtra.



address that Conference. In 1919 at the 13th All India Kurmi - Kshatriya Conference of Kanpur, none else but Shahu was the President and here in this Conference, the masses in India as a token of their love and affection, conferred upon him as a mark of his great services to them, the great and unprecedented title "Rajarshi".<sup>95</sup>

Even among the untouchables he was very popular for his work of uplifting their social status. He, therefore, got a unique honour of being the President of the All India Conferences of these people held at Nagpur and Delhi respectively on March 22, 1920 and February 16, 1922.

His place, again, was always in the first rank among the Indian Princes, although his kingdom was very small. And because of his initiative only, the Chamber of Princes in India,<sup>96</sup> was formed against any possible encroachment upon their powers by the British Government.

In respect of the Brahmins in general, Shahu Maharaj had no grudge in his mind. Many of the keyposts in his administration were in the hands of the Brahmins. Persons like V.D.Tophakhane<sup>97</sup> were his advisers and the most confidentials. In fact what Shahu wanted was not the creation of enmity between the Brahmins and non-Brahmins but the real life of an egalitarian Society in Maharashtra and India. Bapusaheb Patwardhan, a great

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95. Salunkhe, P.B. (Edr), - Shahu Gaurav Granth. P.246

96. Latthe, A.B., Op.cit. Vol.II, P.547.

97. The late Mr.V.D.Tophkhane was the Brahmin and a teacher of high reputation. He was in contact of the Maharaja and wrote a Marathi book on the Maharaja, named 'Rajarshi Shri Chhatrapati Yanche Aantrang - The Real Mind of Shahu Chhatrapati'.

Brahmin ruler in Maharashtra and the brother of Appasaheb Patvardhan, the King of Sangli, once in the course of personal talks, said to Tophkhane that - "Really, Tophkahne, your Maharaja is a jewel. Many in this part misunderstand His Highness, and many others, I believe purposely, misrepresent him. I am really very sorry for all this madness and jealousies among us".<sup>98</sup>

Thus Shahu was defamed as well as correctly understood by his times and contemporaries. The criticism that he was the enemy of the Brahmins was also washed away by the Brahmins. In fact, all those sensible among many castes and religions ultimately accept the universal truth that all men are equal.

Once Prof. Athwale, Gandhiji's disciple in the Gandhi Ashram visited Kolhapur as the friend of Tophkhane. Athwale was a great scholar in Sanskrit. As usual Tophkhane took his guest to introduce the Maharaja. In a meeting thus Athwale and Shahu had a long discourse on religious matters and traditions. Out of their concurrent views and understanding of the Hindu way of life both of them became close and intimate friends. And even after knowing the anti-Shahu views, Athwale in a letter wrote to Tophkhane-"Through you I came into contact with the Maharaja who, in every sense of that title, is a genuine Maharaja, one who can stand the test of the Philosopher, Prince of Plato's imagination".<sup>99</sup>

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98. Tophkhane, V.D. - Rajarshi Shri Shahu Chhatrapati Yanche Antarang, - (Marathi), P. 107.

99. Tophkhane, V.D. - Op.cit., P.109.

Thus, such a great man Shahu, the great lover of humanity passed away on the 6th May 1922 at Bombay on his way back from Baroda to Kolhapur. In his death the poor, the down-trodden and the leaderless majority people lost their great hero and felt his death as if the loss of their family heads.

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### CHAPTER THREE

#### DEALING WITH THE BUREAUCRATS AND BRAHMINS

Introduction: With the Proclamation to the Kolhapur people, on the second day of April 1894, the Rule of Shahu Chhatrapati began in the Kolhapur State.<sup>1</sup> But the great grandeurs and happy rejoicings of an installation ceremony in a Princely State could not invest full powers to any Indian Prince, although, the British Government thought of it. Bureaucracy, combined by the European and Indian souls was quite unwilling to surrender their authoritarian influence and did not allow any Indian Prince to rule according to his own dictates. "The first task" as Latthe had pointed out, which an Indian Prince had to face on his accession was to secure his own position in his State.<sup>2</sup> The affairs in the Kolhapur State, in that respect, were not exception. Immediately, therefore, while making efforts to know the various forces and currents in his administration, Shahu recollected the words of Lord Harris, who wrote in February 1894 to him about a correct clue to the Kolhapur Administration, as -

"Anxious as I know you are to bear your full measure of responsibilities and to do right by your subjects, I trust that you are able to place confidence

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1. K.S.G., Supplement, - Monday 2nd April 1894, p. 2.

2. Latthe, A.B., - Op.cit., Vol. I, p. 83.

in your subordinates. An honest ruler surrounded by men whom we cannot trust is tempted to take too much on himself and to fell over much the burden of his position. I have always thought that the G. (An Indian Prince)<sup>3</sup> means well, but has worried himself into an attitude of mistrust and uncertainty and indecision, by the feeling which every one who bears office in India must feel that he cannot depend upon all his subordinates. Brahmin intrigue is, alas ! not the only intrigue and I have found Marathas and other classes quite equal to it".

Further, in the same letter Harris told that "This advice may be unnecessary as I really know nothing about the present State of Kolhapur but" emphatically he went on saying that, "I do know that its (Kolhapur's) Maharaja has an honest and kind heart and I know how severely the honest man is likely to be taxed when he finds that his honest orders have to be carried out by Bapats and Namjoshis."<sup>4</sup> Again in the same letter the Governor of Bombay advised Shahu "to make preparations before hand for an orderly and organised system of central Administration."

It was then, within a few months of his accession, he

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3. G. (An Indian Prince) denotes the surname Gaikwad of Baroda Chief Sayajirao Maharaja.

4. a) Latthe, A.B., - Op.cit., Vol. I., p. 87.

b) K.A.O., - S.D.R. No. 1, 1894, Letter from Lord Harris dated 1st Feb., 1894.

found no whole-hearted cooperation from the European as well as native officials. In fact, it was the prime duty of the native officers, including the Brahmins, to strengthen the rule of the new Chhatrapati. Instead, they were on the one hand praising the rule of Shivaji and on the other abusing Shahu through their non-cooperation. The cause was rather ordinary that a qualified Kayastha non-Brahmin R.V. Sabnis was appointed by the Maharaja as the Huzur Chitnis<sup>5</sup> and all the State Orders were issued thereafter under signature of the Huzur Chitnis who signed "By Order of His Highness the Maharaja."<sup>6</sup> And the Brahmins did not want him.

In addition to such a beginning of the Brahmins' displeasure, a question arose as to whether the Maharaja should himself go to the Railway Station to see the Political Agent off whenever he went on tour or to welcome him there on his return. The Political Agent, was after all, a servant and it was his duty to respect and maintain the honour and dignity of the Maharaja. On this crucial matter, instead of joining the Chhatrapati, the Brahmin officials sided the British. Under the circumstances, the young Maharaja sought <sup>6</sup>an advice from his teacher Fraser in October 1894. And while replying to Maharaja, the great teacher wrote—

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5. K.S.G. - Extraordinary, Saturday 14th April 1894, P.1.

6. RGAK., for 1894-95, p. 3.

"You say that the Council and the high officers do not obey readily. This was to be expected under the circumstances; but Maharaja, you will save much trouble in the future if you from the first make everyone see that you are the master."<sup>7</sup>

Against this background, it is evident that Kolhapur in those times, needed a strong, capable, so also wise and efficient ruler. And it seems from Shahu's life that he was the most suitable ruler which Kolhapur needed. After assuming power as the Chhatrapati of Kolhapur, immediately therefore, in place of the old Council of Administration, the Chief organ of the State administration, new secretariat known as the Huzur Office was created by Shahu Maharaja. And the new Huzur Office was composed of the same members as before, namely the Diwan, the Chief Justice and the Chief Revenue Officer. The duties of this office were similar to those of the Council of Administration, that is the supervisory and executive work of the State and the disposal of State business hitherto carried on by the late Council.

Khan Bahadur Meherjibhai Kuvarji, a Parsi man was the Diwan or the Prime Minister of the Council of Administration and had been continued. So also was the case of Rao Bahadur Balwant Narayan Joshi, the Chief Judge. Both of them were old

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7. KAO., - SDR, R.No. 4, L.Nos. 423 to 827, Nos. 707-708

and stood in relation of close personal friendship with the late Abasaheb, Shahu's father. In fact, in administrative matters, they were the virtual masters of their respective departments. The Chief Revenue Officer or the Sarsubhe, Sirgaonkar, the third member of the Council, was no doubt, the supporter of the Maharaja, but his voice in the Kolhapur bureaucratic set up was much unknown.

Meherji Bhai Kuvarji was interested to grant positions and support the recruits of his Parshi caste. Joshi, the Chief Judge, was more powerful than Kuvarji, the Diwan, though his position was of a subordinate nature. This was simply because Joshi was a Brahmin and hence a superior or a high caste man. To add to this conflict of superiority and inferiority, the European officers including their highest officer in Kolhapur - the Political Agent, did dominate the working of the State and got the things done as they wished. Sometimes, all of the three different categories in the administration - the Europeans, the Parshis, and Brahmins - were to join together to safeguard their each other's interests and created hurdles in the way of the young Maharaja.

#### DEALING WITH THE EUROPEANS

Among all the three classes or groups dominated the Kolhapur administration, the Europeans were the first who created difficulties before Shahu. With the beginning of the British influence in Kolhapur, all the British and European



officials in Kolhapur service behaved in such an ugly manner that it should be called simply insolent.<sup>8</sup> Shahu had, thus, not only to be aware of the Brahmins, but the British too or in a more correct way, first of the bureaucrats consisted of the Europeans plus natives and then the Brahmins who dominated the State power as well as the whole society.

In the Council of Administration, although there were no Europeans, outside of it, many principal posts in administration were held by them. The P.W.D. was headed by the State Executive Engineer P.E.S. Shannon, the Medical Department by Dr. Sinclair, the Rajaram College by Principal Candy, Female education by Miss Little, the Maternity section of the Albert Edward Hospital by Mrs. Sykes. Similarly, the office of the Political Agent was filled again by almost all the Europeans.

In those days as the Brahmins in bureaucracy were more loyal to the British than their native rulers, both the British and Brahmin bureaucrats were united for each other's interest against the Maharaja. But the Maharaja was not to yield to his bureaucrats. He made the European officers either to resign or to get transferred in the British region. As a result, except Dr. Sinclair, the Kolhapur Darbar Surgeon, who had made Kolhapur his permanent abode, all others had to resign one by one. Miss Little resigned on August 20, 1895, Mrs. Sykes on

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8. Latthe, A.B. - Op.cit. Vol. I, p. 89, and KAQ, SDR, No. 4 1894, L.No. 465.

January 1, 1896, Shannon, at the end of 1896 and so on. However, when the Maharaja was asked about his attitude towards the Europeans, he gave a characteristically outspoken reply --

"... that I like a mixture of different races (castes) in the administration and I have a high opinion of the work done by European officers, especially the good discipline they are able to maintain."

Further, he explained that what he did not like about some of his European officers was "that on the least occasion they carry complaints to the Political Agent."<sup>9</sup>

Mr. Shannon, the State Executive Engineer, from the very beginning of Shahu's rule was showing disregard and behaving as an insolent. A prudent and tactful ruler in Shahu was capable to make pony run along road. In one case it was found that the budget estimate of a few hundred rupees for the repairs of a well was exceeded by several thousands and the Maharaja called for an explanation through his Huzur Office (from Shannon). Now as being the servant, it was the duty of Shannon to give explanation. But he went straight to challenge the Headquarters of Kolhapur about expert wisdom it had to find out fault with the expenditure he had estimated. In this serious matter the young Maharaja very coolly did receive all these protests from his Executive Engineer and cooled down him.

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9. KAO, SDR., No. 5, 1896, No. 978.

with his royal reply that none else, but he - Shahu himself - dissatisfied with an estimate and the Headquarters only asked for an explanation which he (Shahu) himself desired.<sup>10</sup>

MR. CANDY THE PRINCIPAL

C.H. Candy<sup>11</sup> B.A., LL.M. was brought to Kolhapur on loan services to work in the capacity of the Principal of the Rajaram College from 1879, wherein he worked for over 19 years upto April 1899. Then at the instance of the Kolhapur Darbar, the Bombay Government took him back and appointed him as Principal of the Elphinstone High School Bombay.<sup>12</sup> Because of this length of service and British influence in Kolhapur he too had grown insolent and overbearing.

In fact, Candy had become a source of considerable annoyance for many years. His defiant attitude had made him already odious to the Maharaja. This situation had become more tense, when Mr. Candy wanted to proceed on a year's furlough and for that required exchange compensation. After receiving refusal for his exchange compensation Candy, rude as he was, wrote a rather insolent letter to the Huzur office and even went to Bombay Government against the Maharaja. However, the

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10. Latthe, A.B., - Op.cit., Vol. I, p. 88.

11. Principal C.H. Candy, B. 7.3.1851, D. 19.3.1925.

12. Barve, G.R., - Rajaramian, 1931, Golden Jubilee Memorial Volume, pp. 16-17.

Bombay Government sided with the Maharaja and Candy had to apologize for the letter and withdrew it. But crooks of Candy were ceaseless. He circulated false reports about the Maharaja among the European circles.

Ultimately Shahu decided to get rid of Candy. But events in Kolhapur did not permit him immediately. Col. Wray who had become recently the Political Agent in Kolhapur was keeping good relations with Candy. Mostly all the European officers in Kolhapur had a united stand and support to each other. Some of them had already informed the Government of Bombay that the Kolhapur State wished to retain none of the Europeans.<sup>13</sup> Candy, at the same juncture used to boast of his influence at the Headquarters in Bombay. The climax of his insolence was reached when he thrashed a police constable and took away an offender from the custody. The Maharaja, naturally, became restless and thought to handle the situation most successfully. He had often mischievously corrected or exposed the follies of his relatives, officials or servants by poking at them or lightly playing one against the other. By the same method as was wished Candy was thrown on his back again in the service of the British in 1899.<sup>14</sup>

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13. Latthe, A.B., - Op.cit., Vol. I, p. 92.

14. KAO., - SDR, No. 8, Pudaka No. 1, dated March 7, 1899.

COL. WRAY

Colonel J.W. Wray, an Englishman, was appointed as the Political Agent of Kolhapur on March 26, 1897.<sup>15</sup> Although Wray was young as well as inexperienced, the relations between him and the Maharaja were most excellent to start with as he was the friend of the Maharaja's father. However, very soon, Wray became a cause of unprecedented trouble to Shahu and even to Kolhapur State. Latthe, while dealing with the episode, had omitted necessary portions and mentioned that the truth relating to Col. Wray's affairs "may have to await publications for some years to come."<sup>16</sup>

Now the days have come for publication of that truth, as the British Power in India is vanished and Indian Kings and Kingdoms have also been abolished. But Latthe's unpublished writings relating to this episode are not traceable. Shahu, as has been pointed out earlier, hated the European bureaucracy and wanted to insert his men in the administrative machinery of Kolhapur. The appointments that he made of R.V. Sabnis, as the Huzur Secretary, Bhaskarrao Jadhav, the Revenue Officer, and D.A. Vichare, the State Executive Engineer, well, vividly reveal his ideas. To rebuff this and to show superiority and strength of British power to him not alone Col. Wray, but almost all the European officials tried their best. After all, to them, it was the British power which made Shahu the

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15. a) KAD., SDR., No. 5, Pudaka No. 5, 1897, No.1, L.880

b) And he was first appointed officiating Political Agent in March, 1896.

16. Latthe, A.B., Op.cit., Vol. I, p. 115.

Chhatrapati of Kolhapur. Hence, their plans to make Shahu a puppet ruler in their hands were not according to them unfair. At the beginning of his career, he sought frequently, therefore, the guidance and approval for his actions from the Bombay Government.

On the retirement of Shannon in September 1896, it was hoped by the Brahmins in Bureaucracy as they were in conspiracy with the British Civil Servants that the post must go to ~~Tam~~be, a Brahmin, who had worked as Personal Assistant to Shannon and acted as Executive Engineer, whenever Shannon went on leave.<sup>17</sup> No doubt, the claim was somewhat right, but the man had no necessary qualifications. Under the circumstances Shahu sought the services of D.A. Vichare, an Engineer Graduate. And this appointment was too severely criticised by the newspapers. Even Col. Wray, the Political Agent, with whom the Maharaja had friendly relations, disapproved the appointment of Vichare<sup>18</sup>. Shahu had to change his own order to place Vichare from the post of a State Engineer to Huzur Office. However, after two years Vichare was again made the State Executive Engineer.

Thus, for the first time, Shahu and Col. Wray had a clash against one another's interest and their relations began to strain. And the question of the appointments of officers in the

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17. Latthe, A.B., Op.cit., Vol. I, p. 95.

18. RGAK, for 1895-96, p. 5.

State services caused Shahu much worry as the interests of the Political Agent, the Diwan Taraporewalla, at one side and the Darbar or his personal interest at the other clashed together against each other.

The very important incidence in this regard which permanently created enmity between Shahu and Col Wray arose on the issue of the appointment of an assistant Surgeon in the State's Albert Memorial Hospital, Kolhapur. In those days, the Brahmins "who were in his (Shahu's) service tried to retain their positions and prestige through the influence of the Agency."<sup>19</sup> Dr. Deo, a Brahmin as usual, thus, tried through Col. Wray for the post of that Surgeonship and the latter conveyed his advice to the young Maharaja as - "I wrote to the Diwan on the 11th instant (October 1897) suggesting Dr. Deo and he told me the day before yesterday that he would represent your Highness my advice to appoint that officer here on 6 months' trial. So, I was surprised to hear yesterday that Dr. Dorab Seth had been written to, or someone else written to about him."<sup>20</sup> However, Shahu did not give consent for Dr. Deo's appointment. To this Col. Wray, it seems from his letter, got rather annoyed and complained, "I can only say I regret exceedingly that you have not thought fit to take my advice in

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19. Latthe, A.B., Op.cit., Vol. I, p. 90.

20. K.A.O., - S.D.R., No. 6, Pudaka No. 1, Nos. 985 to 1119 dated 15 Oct., 1897, L. 1088-1089.

the matter of the appointment of an additional medical officer in view of the serious danger from plague that is threatening the Kolhapur town and State". Further in the same letter, Wray warned - "I may remind your Highness that your personal physician is a Brahmin and that every single native medical subordinate in this State except one is a Brahmin. It is, therefore, difficult to understand", Wray complains, "why there should be objection to the temporary appointment of an experienced medical officer at this critical time merely because he happens to be a Brahmin."<sup>21</sup>

To add to complications, Taraporewalla, the Diwan, wished on that eve to employ a doctor of his Parsee religion instead of a Brahmin. The Maharaja wanted neither and finally carried on his own point.

#### THE POISON CASE

Col. Wray, naturally then felt insulted and thought to do anything in his capacity to make the young Chhatrapati behave under his control, but his powers were very much limited in that regard. However, an episode happened at Baroda State was to give him satisfaction and inspiration to continue his anti-Shahu activities. That dispute between the Political

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21. K.A.O., - S.D.R., No. 6, Pudaka No. 1, Nos. 985 to 1119 dated 15 October, 1897, L. 1088-1089.



Resident and Baroda King, Malharrao Gaikwad, had taken place in 1875. In that case it was proved that Malharrao Gaikwad, the king of Baroda had made an attempt to give poison in the juice to the Political Resident and ultimately, therefore, he was dethroned by the British Paramount Power.<sup>22</sup> Col. Wray became hopeful, it seems from the memory of that event in Baroda.

By the time of the epidemic of plague of 1898, the relations between Col. Wray and the American Missionaries in Kolhapur were strained on the issue of behaviour of Candy, the Principal of Rajaram College. Candy although was insolent, had been supported by the American Missionaries. Kolhapur was in the tense of plague disease and under the advice of Col. Wray, the Maharaja had made quarantine Rules very strict. As a result, there was a watch on the actions of all the Europeans and American Missionaries. Col. Wray tried within his jurisdiction to harass the American Missionaries, as they were the supporters of Candy. Besides Col. Wray made efforts to remove Dr. Sinclair from his position and expell him out of Kolhapur. Not only that, the steps of Wray had gone even to keep watch on friends and Sardars of the Maharaja. This was not expected of him by the Maharaja. To check the activities of Col. Wray, the American Missionaries also submitted a petition to Bombay Government.

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22. Apte, D.N. - Shri Sayajirao Gaikwad Maharaj (Tisare)  
Vol. I, p. 106.

To repeat the Baroda poison case, an opportunity came to Col. Wray when he heard the visit of James, a member of the Bombay Council, to Kolhapur. And on the 5th August 1899, James paid a visit to Kolhapur. The same night a dinner was arranged in his honour at the Darbar Hall of the New Palace of Shahu Maharaja. All the management in connection with this dinner was under the direct control of Col and Mrs. Wray.<sup>23</sup> In the afternoon, according to Col. Wray's version, he received an anonymous letter warning him that a conspiracy had been made to poison him and that Fernandes had bribed some men to get this work done. Immediately when the news of this letter was brought to the notice of Shahu, he proposed two alternatives - 1) "that the dinner should be dropped from the programme or 2) that the State Police should be asked to watch the arrangements in the dining hall."<sup>24</sup>

Both the proposals were rejected by Col. Wray and every arrangement was made under his own supervision with the assistance of Phillips, his ex-butler. (This ex-butler was raised to the post of a storekeeper in the State P.W.D. a few months earlier) How the arrangements were made, therefore, in the dining hall were not known to any body except to Col. Wray and his assistants. And Col. Wray at the time of dinner, had removed the rolls of bread already served on the table and put

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23. K.A.O., S.D.R., No. 7, Pudaka No. 1 Nos. 1120 to 1298 dated 4th January 1898, pp. 1142-43.

24. Latthe, A.B., Op.cit., p. 116.

in a basket which was kept in a room. Immediately, then new rolls were placed on the dining table.

The rolls of bread kept aside, then were sent to the Chemical Analyser of Bombay. And after a month it was reported that one of the rolls of bread contained a piece and some powder of glass.<sup>25</sup>

Then the Maharaja proposed to start a thorough inquiry into the matter with a view to bring the offenders to book. Col. Wray, however, proposed to allow the matter to go unnoticed pointing out that "if publicity were to be given to it, a great scandal would be created against the Darbar."<sup>26</sup> But the Maharaja thought that "if I were to follow that course, the Darbar would lay itself open to all sorts of surmises and suspicions which would serve as a very useful and convenient instrument to its enemies in the future to prick the Darbar with and to overawe it whenever they choose. I thought I would rather prefer the temporary scandal to the continuous torture."<sup>27</sup>

Shahu had, thus, grasped the situation, as well, the trap that had been planned by Col. Wray. To avoid all the future

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25. K.A.O., S.D.R., No. 8, Pudaka No. 1, Nos. 1299 to 1508 dated 25th Nov., 1899, No. 1490.

26. K.A.O., S.D.R., No. 8, Pudaka No. 1 dated 1st Sept., 1899, No. 1402.

27. Ibid., No. 8 dated 1st October, 1899, No. 1429.

complications, as his hands were clear, he immediately wrote to ~~Col~~ Wray, after receiving the report of the Chemical Analyser that—

"It is really very kind of you to think of the scandal, it may create about the Darbar, as it was a Darbar dinner of which advantage was taken. But I personally think that it is better to risk such scandal than to let the culprits escape. It will only make them very bold to do such things again. If you approve, I shall ask the Police to move in the matter at once."<sup>28</sup>

On the third of September, although Col. Wray disapproved the stand, Shahu ordered Pendarkar, his own Chief of Police, to make a searching inquiry. He also wrote the Bombay Governor to lend services of a competent detective officer to investigate the offence and a Sessions Judge to try the case, if on investigation a case had to be sent up for trial.

Bombay Governor then offered the services of Brewin, the best Police officer under the Bombay Government, but Wray did not permit the Darbar. Here again the asterisk marked<sup>29</sup> by Latthe suggests us that none else, but Col. Wray himself

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28. K.A.O., - S.D.R. No.8 dated 1st September 1899, No. 1400.

29. Latthe, A.B., Op.cit., Vol. I, p. 118.

tried to avoid the inquiry by the Bombay Police. On the other hand Bombay Governor was puzzled on the stand of Col. Wray, their Political Agent in Kolhapur. To find clue to know the truth, ultimately without waiting for consent of the Political Agent, the Bombay Government sent, under intimation to Government of India, the Inspector Gannon of the Bombay Police to undertake the investigations. However, before Inspector Gannon's arrival, Col. Wray asked Shirgaonkar, the Chief Revenue Officer of the State to investigate into the affair. Meanwhile, a threat was given by Col. Wray to Shahu that he would get a commission appointed like the one against the Maharaja Malharrao Gaikwad of Baroda.<sup>30</sup> And in regard to poison case, when he failed to link up expected persons his eyes fell upon the group of officials which owed to ex-Diwan Meherji Bhai and insisted the Darbar to dismiss and expell them out of State. And Kirtikar, who became the victim of the circumstance<sup>x</sup> was asked to go on six months' leave, instantly.<sup>31</sup>

Kirtikar's leaving Kolhapur for Sawantwadi did not help the theory<sup>x</sup> put forward by Col. Wray. A palace servant named Khuttal, on the 18th September revealed to Gannon, the Inspector that Phillips, the ex-butler of Col. Wray, in charge of the dinner, had given him a roll to replace one of the rolls of

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30. Latthe, A.B., Op.cit., Vol., I, p. 119.

31. K.A.O., S.D.R., No. 8, 1899, Nos. 1299 to 1508 No. 1410.

bread when he assisted him. But afterwards told that one Ismail made him to make such a statement. At such a crucial point, another anonymous letter implicating some trusted Maratha Officers and Sardars of the State including Bapusaheb Maharaja, in a new attempt on the precious life of the Colonel reached him.<sup>32</sup> Col. Wray, naturally, was puzzled more than earlier and Shahu found no other way but to request instantly the Bombay Government for Brewin and a British Judge to hold the trial if the accused were commissioned to the Sessions. But Col. Wray opposed to the requests that the Maharaja had made to Bombay Government. He, in fact, wanted to wind up the case before the arrival of Mr. Brewin.<sup>33</sup> Indirectly he had also tried to prevent the stand of the Maharaja on calling a Magistrate from outside which meant no trust on the State officials. Shahu, as he was firm to his decision and wanted to bring out the whole truth, then wrote to the His Excellency the Governor of Bombay that--

"I have consulted Col. Wray in this matter but he does not agree with me. He says it might bespeak want of confidence on my part in my own judicial officers. Perhaps some may take that view, but I think it is better to incur this risk than to leave room for people to say that the judge may have been influenced by the

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32. Latthe, A.B., Op.cit., p. 120.

33. K.A.O., S.D.R. No. 8, 1899 No. 1402.

Darbar or some influential party at the Darbar owing to pressure brought to bear on the Darbar by Political Agent. This is the point of view from which I look at the matter and, considering the important issues at Stake, I feel constrained to place before Government my earnest desire to have an experienced Judge from the British district to decide this case."<sup>34</sup>

Why Shahu insisted to have an officer or Judge from the British district had a substantial ground. The case, if decided by Judge of the Kolhapur State and the accused would have been acquitted, Col. Wray and his party would have said that the Darbar got an acquittal as it was itself involved in the offence, and if convicted, the pressure from the Political Agent. The trial, therefore, by internal judge was not to be trustworthy.

Then Col. Wray, before the arrival of Brewin, through a State Magistrate, tested the evidence collected by Gannon and, hurries were made to come to decision. Knowing all these procedures at the Court, Shahu Maharaja instructed the Public Prosecutor to apply for further remand pending the arrival of Brewin. Col. Wray did not like this, but Mr. Brewin came to Kolhapur on the day the trials were to begin against Fernandes. The Court, therefore, granted an adjournment to enable Brewin to proceed with the case. The second adjournment postponed the

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34. K.A.O., S.D.R. No. 8, 1899, No. 1431.

case to October 30th on which date Brewin instructed the Public Prosecutor to withdraw the case on the ground that no substantial evidence had come up throughout the inquiries from the 6th October 1899, against Fernandes. Legally thus, the poison case was ended without bearing any fruit.

Brewin's Report was revealed about the middle of November 1899.<sup>35</sup> Accordingly, it was found that there was no bonafide plot to murder or injure Col. Wray.<sup>36</sup> Meanwhile, as there was urge because of tensions in Kolhapur, Shahu thought to see the Governor and get the decision at the earliest, with its good or bad effects. And on the 10th and 11th of December 1899, he met the Governor and discussed with him all other problems of administration along with the poison case and attitude of Col. Wray, the Political Agent. The descriptions of the discussions between him and the Governor given by Shahu himself were as follows :-

"It seems His Excellency was satisfied with the explanation given by me on the various points touched. I had to correct the wrong impressions His Excellency had about Dr. Sinclair and Mr. Shirgaonkar by acquainting him with their antecedents, their qualifications and good work they have done and have been doing. Then came the

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35. K.A.O., S.D.R. No. 8, 1899, No. 1470 dated 25th Nov., 1899.

36. Ibid., No. 8, 1899, 4th December, No. 1483.



more difficult and delicate task of speaking about the Political Agent. I said (to him) all that I had to say very freely, but I am not sure what impression it made on His Excellency. So far as I could gather, the idea of headquarters seems to be that Col. Wray is now failing in health and his actions do not deserve severe criticism. But I had to say plainly that that was no reason why the Darbar should suffer the consequences of his illhealth and allow very serious charges to hang over the heads of some of its high officers and be worried in endless other ways. I was promised that Col. Wray shall be going on long leave on the 9th March next and would not return. His Excellency asked me also to see him again in the next month so that he would personally introduce me to the new Governor. I should very much like to see His Excellency. But trips to Bombay are rather costly and there is no knowing what form famine may assume by that time."<sup>37</sup>

Thus the poison case was ended bearing no fruits, but its imprints were socially and politically far reaching to effect the life in Kolhapur and Maharashtra. Latthe, the first pioneering biographer of Shahu Maharaja had used no doubt all the sources relating to this case, but because of the British Power in India, he had limitations to tell the naked truth.

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37. K.A.Q.S.D.R. No. 8, 1899, No. 1499 dated 27th December, 1899.

He had, therefore, throughout his work mentioned the names of important persons and British officials involved in this case and in some other affairs only by putting the first letter of their names in capitals such as Mr. F. means Mr. Fernandes, Mr. C. means Mr. Candy, the Principal of Rajaram College, Col. W. means Col. Wray and so on and so forth. Even with the help of these symbolic names, those who were acquainted with the Kolhapur Darbar and atmosphere could know what Latthe meant. Besides, the gaps that Latthe had kept in his books, mention clearly that those were concerned to reveal the bitter truth and evolve clash. So far, this poison case is concerned, the question comes, what exactly would have been the truth ?

The inference which arrives at from the poison case is this, that there was no bonafide plot to murder or injure Colonel Wray. So also no culprit was discovered.

Although writings of Latthe in regard to this case are untraceable it is evident from the above accounts that the whole case was a conspiracy not against Col. Wray but against Shahu Maharaja and the conspirator was none else than Col. Wray himself. The ambitious British officers in the service of native States, had always acted as the men of supreme power and tried to exhibit that, not the native Princes but these Political Agents were the real masters.

In general, it must be understood from the event in Baroda,

the British, and even the Bombay Government were not interested in creating troubles to native Chiefs. And what mostly increased the difficulties of Princes were the ill-attitudes and unwanted ambitions of the British officers for grabbing powers. And Col. Wray was one of that characterists. X

In the poison case also, from all the material available as a source of this episode, it seems, there was a planned conspiracy without the consent or approval or intimation of the Bombay Government. Otherwise such an offence committed against a British Officer in a Princely State would have never been tolerated by the British Government. The reference that Col. Wray made of the Malharrao Gaikwad's disposition, definitely reveals that he was bent upon either to reduce or dethrone Shahu from the Kingship of Kolhapur.

Col. Wray, after his defeat in the case, left for England on leave from 9th March 1900 and Kolhapur as well as Shahu Maharaja were freed from tension and tyranny of the British bureaucrats. And Col. Wray was immediately after his return from England in 1900, transferred to Sawantwadi. Shahu came out from the trap of the poison case, unhurt and victorious. But the tragedy of the Brahmins in Kolhapur, or of the elite class in Maharashtra was this that nobody among them sided him. All those who helped him in this critical hour were mostly the Europeans. To add to the traditional tension of caste enmity,

the Kolhapur Brahmins took their stand against the Chhatrapati.<sup>38</sup>

Meanwhile, on the advice of Fraser, his teacher, Shahu requested the Bombay Government to send a civilian to succeed Col. Wray. A well known Orientalist A.M.T.Jackson, I.C.S. was then appointed in Kolhapur but he remained till the middle of June 1900 and Col. C.W.H. Seely succeeded him. Fortunately after Col. Wray's disappearance from Kolhapur, the relations between Shahu and the Political Agents, remained very cordial and happy and problems dealing with the British or European bureaucrats were overcome.

#### THE NATIVE BUREAUCRATS

Among the native bureaucrats in Kolhapur, Brahmins were in majority and dominated almost all the departments of administration. So long as India was living the life of middle ages, no question arose of Brahmins' monopoly in the State Services. They were the only class in the Hindu society privileged to learn and teach. All others, naturally looked upon them not only as wise, learned, as well as guides and priests, but most essential also to administer the State affairs. However, the days had been changed after 1850, as Mahatma Phuley began to imbibe the principle of equity among the people other than the Brahmins. The stand of Phuley was

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38. K.A.O., S.D.R., No. 28, Wodehouse, letter dated 24th February 1919.

not to oppose the Brahmins, but to give humanitarian base wherever there was scope for progress and development of man. But the dearth of social reformers standing in the line of Phuley and the unpreparedness of the masses to compete the tides of the new progress and modernity did give no satisfactory achievements.

To Shahu, there was a different issue of protecting the high ideals and traditions of a welfare State that Chhatrapati Shivaji, the founder of the Maratha Power had introduced. There is no direct evidence to show to whom Shahu owed the philosophy of a welfare State, social progress and humanitarian outlook. Among all the teachers of Shahu, S.M. Fraser was the most ideal administrator as well as an idealist and a sociologist of a high merit. Under his guidance and tutorship, Shahu had spent more time than any other teacher. After becoming the king of Kolhapur also, Shahu had not forgotten his old teacher but sought guidance and blessings whenever he needed. It is inferred from the affectionate attachment of Shahu and his teacher that Fraser was the Chief guide and inspirer of Shahu for all his social and political philosophy.

In 1848, the first school was opened in Kolhapur and by the time of 1894 the year of Shahu's accession to power, the percentage of literacy in Kolhapur was hardly 4 to 5 per cent and to the lots below the Brahmins there was not even one

per cent.<sup>39</sup> Besides there was a great dearth of qualified men to fill up the State Departments. ~~The State was asked to recruit therefore, persons from all castes for reducing the dearth of qualified men~~ <sup>and</sup> the excessive influence of one caste in the State administration. This policy, naturally, often became a ground for criticism against him. However, as Latthe had pointed out, the first task before Shahu was to see the various sections of the population were represented in proper proportion in the administrative system of his State.<sup>40</sup>

In the year 1894-95 there were in the General Department 60 Brahmins out of the total of 71 officers and in the Khasgi Department, there were 46 Brahmins to only 7 non-Brahmins.<sup>41</sup> In all the State Departments, as well as at the headquarters of divisional and Taluka places there was a majority of the Brahmin officers from top to bottom. What mattered to Shahu was not the number or influence of the Brahmins but the ill-based attitude of them towards the people other than the Brahmins. Brahmins in general either in power or without power, never liked the Hindus in other Varnas and castes, making efforts for progress. To give a secular base to the State Services, Shahu thought to introduce communal representation.

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39. Modak, B.P., - Industrial Survey of Kolhapur, p. 134, published in 1896.

40. Latthe, A.B., - Op.cit., Vol. I, p. 152.

41. Gen-Ad-Kop. for 1894-95, p. 93.

This change was not to go without opposition as well as without criticism. From the appointment of R.V. Sabnis, as the Chitnis or Secretary of the Huzur Office in 1894, Brahmins in Kolhapur opened a front to attack him, through Kolhapur and Poona Press. As a result, it became a boon in disguise that the non-Brahmins from other parts of Maharashtra approached the Kolhapur State for securing jobs. Bhaskarrao Jadhav and some Marathas in Kolhapur services were the outside graduates. The Samarth, the newspaper of V.G. Vijapurkar wrote on the 23rd January 1901, that "Already the Darbar has erred enough in this direction. There is deep displeasure and serious disquietitude among the Rajaramian graduates in this matter."<sup>42</sup> But this "Samarth" and its editor were dumb when they saw the graduates, specially the Brahmin graduates from the Rajaram College, occupied posts in the Bombay Presidency and out of it also. And the officers selected by the Maharaja could not be assailed on the ground of unfitness as all of them were fully qualified persons. "Samarth" of V.G. Vijapurkar had also agreed on the issue when it wrote--

"Almost all of them (the new officers) are University men of very high order of intelligence, but the various elements have not been kept in due proportion and a preponderating influence of the non-Brahmin elements seems to account for the occurrence of unpleasant events during

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42. Vijapurkar, V.G. - Samartha, dated 23.1.1901.

the recent few years."<sup>43</sup>

Thus the Brahmins in bureaucracy and Brahmins in general began to oppose Shahu and his policies.

In the Chaturvarnya system the Brahmins were the superiors and their highest position in Hinduism was unchallengeable. The introduction of non-Brahmin element in the State Services ultimately was to grant posts of honour to them and some Brahmins were likely to be subordinate of such non-Brahmin officers. This was strange enough and perhaps never happened before. To maintain their status in the society as well as in the Services they had to oppose Shahu and his progressive activities. Accordingly, in 1896, when a Jain<sup>44</sup> undergraduate was appointed in the Revenue Department, the Chief Judge Joshi at once took the Maharaja to task. As a result the order of appointment was cancelled.<sup>45</sup>

Of course, it was not in Kolhapur only, but in all the princely, specially, Hindu States in India, that advice of the Brahmins to a king was just as an order from the supreme power. However, after the initial period, Shahu had gone on his own plans, because of which, slowly an idea was spread in Kolhapur

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43. Vijapurkar, V.G., - Samarth, weekly dated 30.1.1901.

44. This undergraduate was none else but Prof. Latthe himself - the biographer of Shahu Maharaja and one who became Diwan (Prime Minister) of Kolhapur in 1926.

45. Latthe, A.B., - Op.cit., Vol. I, p. 89.



that he was against the Brahmins. And his refusal to appoint Dr. Deo, the Brahmin who approached through Col. Wray and appointments of non-Brahmins like R.V. Sabnis, Bhaskarrao Jadhav to high posts and intention to appoint educated men like Latthe, were sufficient grounds for his Brahmin critics to call him anti-Brahmin. To them, it was not better or beneficial to tolerate the stand of Shahu Maharaja. Once if they could tolerate, as Vijapurkar had pointed out, there would be no end to misfortunes of the Brahmins.<sup>46</sup>

The Brahminical move in those days was in general, that without Kolhapur there was no place to them. Even the Brahmins outside Kolhapur, therefore, sided the Kolhapur Brahmins against the stand of Shahu. In the tense situation the famous episode of the Vedokta affair took place in Kolhapur.

The Vedokta affair, although seemed to be religious, was based on socio-economic problems. However, it was not the Vedokta alone which directly or indirectly involved the Brahmin bureaucrats and subjects in Kolhapur to hamper the growth of Shahu's administration, but affairs like the Tai Maharaj case and Shivaji Club also. But, prior to all these affairs, the role of other bureaucrats and then the Brahmin attitude in general will be dealt with.

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46. Vijapurkar, V.G., - Granthamala, 7th Dec., 1896.

OTHERS IN KOLHAPUR BUREAUCRACY

Other than the Europeans and the Brahmins, the third influenced community prevailed in the Kolhapur administration was the Parsis. At the commencement of Shahu's monarchical power, Khan Bahadur Meherji Kuvarji Taraporewalla was the Diwan of Kolhapur and Dorabji Pallonjee, another Parsi, the Chief of Police of Kolhapur. The Parsis, in a way, were in sheer minority, but occupied the key posts.

As it is, there in the history of the British Rule in India, the top most people in the religious and trading oligarchy supported openly the ruling masters. In the native States also the stand of these communities was the same. But Taraporewalla, as was aware of his retirement in the coming few years, showed no interest to indulge in the strife between the Maharaja and the British as well as of Brahmin officers. He was sure, again, that the opposition to the British officers would certainly cost heavy for the young Chhatrapati. Rightly, he then warned Shahu that though his motives might be noble, the fight would be disastrous to his State.<sup>47</sup>

Diwan Taraporewalla was the man of self-respect and intelligence. Tactfully, hence knowing the danger of British disfavour, he managed to push his own influence in Kolhapur through pushing the men of his choice in the State Service.

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47. Latthe, A.B., - Op.cit., Vol. I, p. 94.

Whenever there was any opposition to his decision from the British, he prepared to compromise. In the opening years of Shahu's rule, when a question arose of appointing an assistant Surgeon in the Albert Hospital, he too pushed the name of Dr. Dorabsheth for that post. But times were changed for him. The earlier Political Agent Col. Charles Wodehouse was replaced by Col. Wray - a shrewd and haughty man. As usual, as cited earlier, Col. Wray, the Political Agent<sup>48</sup> had recommended the name of Dr. Deo, a Brahmin for the said post against the one supported by the Diwan. Differences, thus, with Col. Wray led to the retirement of Khan Bahadur Meherji Kuverji Taraporewalla<sup>49</sup> and Parsi influence in Kolhapur came to an end.

Dealing with the bureaucrats in any State is ever difficult and delicate. Specially in a Princely State like Kolhapur, the task was more strenuous and required tact, courage and skill. Bureaucracy in all its forms is a past master of administrative powers. If it does not find its interests safe, it can go to any extent for creating problems through wrong administrative decisions and guidance. Shahu had problems from the start of his royal career as he himself described that "Sometimes it happens that the Political Agent gives one advice and the Darbar, the office of Diwan, a different one. In such a case you can only imagine the strength of the ruler who carried the

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48. K.A.O., S.D.R. No. 6, 1897, No. 1090.

49. RGAK, for 1895-96, p. 3.

point both against the Political Agent and the Darbar. The worst of it is that, spies are sent to watch the actions of high officials like Dr. Sinclair and others and even my friends and Sardars."<sup>50</sup>

Under the situation, with all these perplexing circumstances Shahu pushed on his work with a tact and judgement which would have done credit to administrator of a more mature age. And during all those days, the main feature of his policy was to be "to subdue the influence of his officers and effect retrenchment"<sup>51</sup>, and by that to seek the principle of equity for all the people in Hindu society.

#### DEALING WITH THE BRAHMINS - THE VEDOKTA, ETC.

The Kolhapur State, next to the European bureaucrats was dominated by the Brahmins. During the Diwan Barve regime, the Chitpawan Brahmins had almost overrun the State.<sup>52</sup> Other than the Europeans, the names like Thatte, Bhawe, Altekar, Godase, Joshi and Kulkarni were very common and most of them had occupied the important posts in the State administration. What actually the Kolhapur Brahmin bureaucrats wanted in those days, was not the self-Government, but the Government which would grant them more facilities. Naturally, they opposed the

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50. Latthe, A.B., Op.cit., Vol. I, p. 94.

51. Ibid.

52. Keer, Dhananjay, - Shahu Chhatrapati, p. 41.

stand of Shahu Maharaja of granting State Services to other castes or non-Brahmins. Vijapurkar, through his "Samarth", therefore, as being the mouth-piece of the Kolhapur Brahmins criticised the Maharaja and his advisers as the opponents of the Brahmins and taking away the loaf of bread from the mouths of the Brahmins.<sup>53</sup> With this view only the anti-Shahu campaign was opened in Kolhapur to which patriots from Poona and other parts of Maharashtra joined even when they were fighting for freedom against the British. Under the circumstances, opportunity came to them to unite the Brahmins in the name of religion when the Vedokta episode took place in November 1899 at Kolhapur. "The Vedokta" therefore, as Latthe had said "was an occasion for a trial of strength and nothing more"<sup>54</sup> for the Brahmins against their Maharaja.

#### PRE-VEDOKTA AFFAIR

The two Varna theory had placed all the three Varnas — Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras — under the Shudra Varna. As a result, the Kshatriyas lost their rights of Vedokta<sup>55</sup> form of worship. Chhatrapati Shivaji, the founder of the Maratha Power on this account only was also refused the right

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53. Vijapurkar, V.G. (Ed.) - Samarth, 17.9.1898.

54. Latthe, A.B., Op.cit., Vol. I, p. 155.

55. The Hindu rituals require two forms of hymns: 1) Vedokta, which are based on the Vedas and are allowed to be used by the persons of first three Varnas and 2) Puranokta, based on the Puranas which are meant for the Shudras.

to Vedokta. But his tacts won a Brahmin in Kashi, the famous Gaga Bhatta and he performed coronation ceremony of Shivaji in the Vedokta way. The Marathas, as a caste in Maharashtra, then, had their kingdom for about 50 years or more under their control, but nowhere it comes to our knowledge that all the Marathas in Maharashtra followed the Vedokta form of worship in their day-to-day life. Under the Peshwas, the status of the Marathas all along with other than the Brahmins was lowered down to meaningless. And Nana Phadnis managed through his representative at the Satara Court, to get the ceremony of Shahu II at Satara performed in Puranic forms.<sup>56</sup>

Brahmins in the Deccan did not take the right stand from the Vedokta ceremony of Shivaji's coronation. To rebuff the monopoly and traditionalism of the Brahmins, in 1777, Kolhapur Chhatrapati, Shivaji had issued a firman assuring the Prabhus, the Vaishyas, the Jamindars, the Vatandars and the rayats that the traditional rights of all communities obstructed for a time by the invasion of the Deccan by the Muslims, would be restored to them. "The Communities" Shivaji ordered, "which have a right to Vedokta ritual but whose right has been overlooked on account of either the Mussalman rule or their hatred by the Brahmins should now find out their own practices

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56. Keer, Dhananjay, - Shahu Chhatrapati, p. 81.

and observe them properly. If any Brahmin sets up quarrels against the Shastras on account of his hatred for others or his greed for money, the community concerned should apply to Sarkar."<sup>57</sup>

The efforts of Pratapsinh Maharaja of Satara proved in 1832 the right of the Kshatriyas - the Marathas - to the Vedokta rituals.<sup>58</sup> Then in 1896, the Vedokta controversy again cropped up in Baroda. All rites at the palace of Baroda King - Maharaja Sayajirao Gaikwad - were performed in the Puranic forms. But because of impact of the Satya Shodhak movement started in Baroda by young workers like Damodarpant Yande, Awate and Dhamniskar<sup>59</sup>, Gaikwad Maharaja was himself convinced to have Vedokta form of rituals. And on 15th October 1896, against the opposition of the orthodoxy, Sayajirao Maharaja got performed the Vedokta ceremony through his Gujarati priests - Pandit Rewashankar Shastri, Pandit Bholanath Shastri and Pandit Shivadatta Shastri. Lokmanya Tilak, the new emerging leader criticised the Maharaja for introducing the Vedokta in Baroda. Both Tilak and his Kesari were strong opponents of new social change. And it was tragedy that Dhananjay Keer has pointed out<sup>that</sup> men like Tilak had been the leaders of the Indian

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57. Quoted from Latthe, A.B., Op.cit., Vol. I, p. 176.

58. Naik, T.B., Op.cit., p. 17.

59. Keer, Dhananjay, - Shahu Chhatrapati, p. 82.

60. Apte, D.N., - Shri Maharaja Sayajirao Gaikwad (III) Yanche Charitra, Vol. II, p. 121.

society at that time.<sup>61</sup>

In the Kolhapur House of the Chhatrapatis, the practice of Vedokta rites was in existence until 1860 A.D. In general, from the inception of Kolhapur State there was absence of male issue in the House of the Chhatrapatis. One Raghunath Shastri, the priest of Babasaheb Maharaja (1839 to 1866) pointed out this fact to Babasaheb Maharaja and ascribed reason of Vedokta rites at the Palace.<sup>62</sup> Already again there were stories that the famous Gaga Bhatta who performed Vedokta rites at the coronation of Shivaji died in a lavatory soon after, and Jijabai, the mother of Shivaji also died after some days. Babasaheb Maharaja fell a victim to these superstitions thus aroused in his mind and stopped the tradition of Vedokta rites at the Kolhapur Palace.<sup>63</sup>

#### THE TEXT OF THE VEDOKTA AFFAIR

The text of Vedokta affair in Kolhapur which is rather called the cause of the Brahmin non-Brahmin controversy, is after all, a minor incident. From its physical appearance it seems, if there would have been no ill-will~~s~~ against each other, between the Brahmins and non-Brahmins and between the Kolhapur Brahmins and their Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaja, the

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61. Dhananjay Keer - Shahu Chhatrapati, p. 83.

62. Latthe, A.B., Op.cit., Vol. I, p. 183.

63. Naik, T.B., Op.cit., p. 19.



the whole matter would have been subsided. But what mattered to the Brahmins in Kolhapur was the policy of Shahu to permit non-Brahmins to State Services and high positions in the administration. Besides the reform era that had begun in Kolhapur and Maharashtra caused the Brahmins as a danger to their status. Against this situation, the Vedokta in Kolhapur found its head up in all the matters concerned to the Darbar and people of Kolhapur.

As usual Shahu Maharaja "an essentially orthodox religious man in various ways" used to perform his daily puja - worship - with regularity. In every Kartik - which usually falls in October or November - he used to go to the Panchaganga river, early in the morning for a sacred bath. In the Kartik of 1899<sup>64</sup>, he along with Bapusaheb Maharaja, Mamasahab Khanvilkar, his brother and brother-in-law and Rajaram Shastri Bhagwat of Bombay and others went to the river. And a Brahmin "used to attend this party at the river to chant the sacred Mantras and make the bath holy by his blessings." The Hindu custom tells that a priest should bathe before reciting hymns or performing worship. But as it had been observed from earlier days, the priest attended the party without bath and recited the hymns. One of the members in the party of Shahu, therefore, pointed out this matter to the priest. This was simply because one of the members in the party

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64. Latthe, A.B., - Op.cit., Vol. I, p. 186.

knew that the Brahmin priest spent his night in brothels.<sup>65</sup> The query that was made with the priest was without any motive or ill-will and it was not to cause any trouble to that Brahmin. But the whole scene was turned unusual when the priest replied : "It was not necessary for him to bathe as the persons to be blessed were mere Shudras, who had a right to the lower Puranic blessings as distinguished from the Vedic Mantras which alone deserved a preliminary bath."<sup>66</sup> Thereupon, also, Shahu and his brother Bapusaheb convinced and told him that they belonged to the Kshatriyas of the purest blood and that he should not unnecessarily abuse calling them Shudras. But instead of either subsidizing the matter or taking his words back, "No" said the priest, "I deny these spurious claims" and further stated that "unless the all-powerful Brahmin community decided otherwise, he would never treat them as anything but Shudras."<sup>67</sup> This was too much for Shahu. But he maintained his dignity by not arguing with the priest. Hence the party returned very much disgusted.

Afterall, this was a rude shock to Shahu Maharaja. Even then nothing would have happened aftermath of this incident, if Rajaram Shastri Bhagwat would not remain present there. Little was known to Maharaja and other members of his party about the distinction between the Puranic and Vedic Mantras. It was Rajaram Shastri, a great Sanskrit scholar, historian

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65. Latthe, A.B., - Op.cit., Vol. I, p. 186.

66. Ibid.

and linguist who understood the difference and dignities so also the values of the different Mantras. He, therefore, pointed out to the Maharaja as to why the priest recited Puranic hymns when Vedokta hymns were prescribed for the Kshatriyas.<sup>68</sup> This had then given naturally a new turn to the minor incident.

Shahu, the young Maharaja of Kolhapur by this time, was just free of tension created by the poison case that Col. Wray had conspired. But the offshoot of the Vedokta affair troubled his peace. However, from the Kartik or November 1890 to October 1900, no record tells us about the action Shahu had taken either against that rude priest or the Brahmins in Kolhapur. It was but incorrect to presume that the insulted Marathas under the patronage of Shahu would have remained silent on the issue of the denial of the right of Vedokta to them and their Chhatrapati. Equally also it could not be unbelievable that the Brahmins remained unthoughtful over the issue and could have no plans to oppose the Chhatrapati or his Marathas. Truth lies more in the actions that the Brahmins had taken prior to the actions of Shahu and his Government.

"Samarth", a newspaper known as the mouthpiece of the Brahmins, was started on the 6th July 1898 by Vishnu Govinda Vijapurkar, a Sanskrit professor in the Rajaram College of Kolhapur State. In 1898, Vijapurkar and his paper 'Samarth' were

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67. Latthe, A.B., - Op.cit., Vol. I, p. 186.

68. Ibid.

reactionary and opposed to the Vedokta rights of the Maharaja and the Maratha community. Prof. Vijapurkar and his Granthamala were patronised and grants were regularly given to Granthamala.<sup>69</sup> But because of Shahu's social policy he joined hands with the British bureaucrats. During that period Shahu got transferred, Candy, the Principal of Rajaram College, whose reference has already been made. In honour of such a man a send off function was arranged in the Rajaram College. How could a nationalist like Vijapurkar arrange such a function in honour of a British ? However, Vijapurkar took the lead to arrange such a function in honour of Principal Candy<sup>70</sup>, simply to win the favour of British Government and to oppose the Maharaja.

Naturally, Vijapurkar's writings in his Granthamala and in the "Samarth" were likely to be the anti-Shahu thoughts. And two pen-names were adopted by him to write respectively in Granthamala and Samarth, as Guruji - a teacher - and Rajkarni - a politician. This had brought him a title as the leader of the Brahmins. His contacts, again with Lokmanya Tilak paid him much to lead the Brahmins in Kolhapur. He, therefore, feeling safe for his anti-Shahu activities, made speeches and wrote articles in supporting the Brahminical stand of

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69. Prof. Vijapurkar started two newspapers - 1) Granthamala on 2nd April 1894 and the Samarth on 6th July 1898 and on the occasion of their opening, Shahu had donated Rs. 500/- and Rs. 300/- as special donation, respectively. Besides, the State was asked to purchase regularly a certain number of issues. See RGAK, for 1894-95 and 1897-98, p. 83.

70. Kanade, R.G., - Prof. V.G. Vijapurkar (Biography), p. 18. 1928, Poona.

disclaiming the rights of the Chhatrapati Shahu, and the Maratha community to the Vedokta rituals. In one of his articles in August 1900, under title "Jatibhed Va Marathyanche Nashta Vaibhav" meaning caste distinctions and dying glory of the Marathas, he pointed out that, "a society is not a laboratory wherein an expected item of a thing can be prepared on arranging mixture of any thing to another"<sup>71</sup> - the dispute of the Vedokta-Puranokta was unnecessary. The times on their own would decide the matter (he hoped here in the favour of the Brahmins) hence, why should there be haste and urge ? In Kolhapur, Vedokta rituals were performed previously. In the time of Babasaheb Maharaja instead of Gayatri Mantra, Puranokta Mantras were introduced. This is the tradition of Kolhapur". Then in the same article he appealed to the Brahmins that "the Brahmins should not give up their privileges that had come to them since the early times. Self-respect is supreme and if time forces them to choose between self-respect and their salaries - Vatan or hereditary lands - Vatan, they must give up services so also Inams but to stick up to self-respect."<sup>72</sup>

To raise the tension between the Brahmins and non-Brahmins, so as to show that the Brahmin power is superior to that of

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71. Granthamala, dated 13th August, 1900. And for similar views, <sup>of Lokmanya</sup> see - Pradhan, G.P. and Bhagwat, A.K., - Lokmanya Tilak, p. 130.

72. Ibid., dt. 13 August, 1900.

the Chhatrapati, the Brahmin-ridden Municipality of Kolhapur put up at the Ghats on the Panchaganga river notices reserving the best of them for the use of the Brahmins.<sup>73</sup> The reservation of Ghats for the Brahmins made a general impression that the Maharaja was nobody as he was a Shudra and the Brahmins were supreme in all social and religious matters. This was a challenge, actually not to Shahu as an individual but the king or Chhatrapati of Kolhapur.

Even in such a critical period, there were noble or rational Brahmins in Kolhapur like the great Vedic scholar - Narayan Bhatt Sevekari. His deep studies in the Vedas made him <sup>x</sup>to stand in support of the Vedokta rights to the ~~Marathas~~ and their Chhatrapati. Rightly, therefore, in the month of Sravana - when the usual thread ceremony of the Hindus takes place - Narayan Bhatt Sevekari on August 28, 1901, officiated\* according to the Vedokta form, the Shravani for the Marathas.<sup>74</sup> To the Marathas, the celebration of Shravani in accordance with the Vedokta rites, was a matter of satisfaction and the Vedokta affair was to end there only.

On the 29th August, Lokmanya Tilak involved in the Tai Maharaj case, visited Kolhapur again without pre-plan. Fortunately for the Marathas, on the same day there was invitation from Narayan Bhatt Sevekari, to listen the concluding parts of the Rigveda recitals. But the members of the Brahmin

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73. Kolhapur Municipal Records for 1900 to 1901, p. 37

74. Latthe, A.B., - Op.cit., Vol. I, p. 188.

Panchayat, encouraged by Tilak's presence in Kolhapur "burst out with anger at the so-called breach of conduct on the part of the priest."<sup>75</sup> And Sevekari was ex-communicated for his act of Shravani and Rigveda recitals to the Marathas. Thus Lokmanya Tilak and the Kolhapur Brahmins joined their hands together for a battle against Shahu. The writing of Vijapurkar, in his Granthamala, in those days gave a very much perverted view of Hindu philosophy and advised the Brahmins to preserve their traditional conservative status at any cost. This was to create a wall of hatred and animosity between the Brahmins and the non-Brahmins. As a part of precautionary measure, Shahu Maharaja, therefore, stopped in 1901 the regular grants of Granthamala of Vijapurkar.<sup>76</sup> Secondly then, the ex-communication of Sevekari by the Brahmins was the problem to which Shahu found no solution within his immediate reach.

9. [After the Hindu month of Shravan, Bhadrapad commences] when all the Hindus are required to perform certain rites - Shraddha for the satisfaction of the souls of their deceased ancestors. That was proper occasion to Rajopadhye for performing Vedokta forms of rituals at the Royal House. He was, therefore, asked to perform rites according to Vedokta, only because he was paid by the State for <sup>such</sup> services. But he neglected <sup>ignored</sup> the order and did not go to Panhala where Shahu was residing in those days. On 7th October 1901, as a result, an order was

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75. Keer, Dhananjay, - Shahu Chhatrapati, p. 90.

76. RGAK, for 1901-1902, p. 67.

issued to him asking not to neglect his duties and to adopt Vedic rituals at the Palace.<sup>77</sup> But Rajopadhye did not change his stand. The Brahmayrinda was not also silent. Ex-communication of Sevekari was not sufficient<sup>†</sup> to them. They wanted to assert their power as the supreme one. They had thought of their old weapon of religious persecution and some fourteen <sup>of</sup> them presented memorandum to His Highness through the Naib Khasgi Karbhari, calling on him to prevent Narayan Bhatt and his adherents from touching the Goddess Ambabai or from performing any religious duty in the palace. This memorandum was handed over to the Naib Khasgi Karbhari, on October 13, 1901, in the Temple of Ambabai when he and the Rajopadhye were actually engaged in appointing learned Brahmins to perform certain rites, from the next day, in connection with the Navaratra Dasara festival. On <sup>the</sup> inquiries from the Karbhari about the step of the Brahmins, Rajopadhye <sup>↑</sup>told that the stand of the Brahmins was <sup>↓</sup>a most uncalled for and unauthorised one and ought not to be given any importance.<sup>78</sup> Thereafter he himself handed over the betel-nuts to Narayan Bhatt and his adherents a retainer for their services during the Navaratra festival. On the next day then without anybody's prevention Narayan Bhatt worshipped the Goddess - Ambabai. The Brahmayrinda, however, declared that the Goddess was polluted by the touch of Narayan Bhatt and forcibly prevented others from worshipping her. After this, the fourteen Brahmins approached the Maharaja

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77. K.A.O., S.D.R., No. 10, 1901, Nos. 1680 to 1872, No. 1837.

78. Latthe, A.B., Op.cit., Vol. I, p. 190.



and asked him to pass orders on their application of the previous day and demanded permission to purify the Goddess. This was how the quarrel between two opposite groups of the Brahmins - the Sevekari versus Brahmavrinda - began. And unless two sides were heard, it was not possible for the Maharaja to pass any order. Hence for the time being to avoid collision of the two parties, he directed both of them not to enter the temple till the question was decided. But Brahmavrinda instead of following the order of Shahu, rushed to the Political Agent, Colonel Seeley and made oral complaints against the Chhatrapati. Col. Seeley asked them for a memo in writing. After receiving it, he answered that he did not think it necessary to interfere in a religious dispute of that nature and that Chhatrapati Government was the final authority in such cases.<sup>79</sup>

After some days, the Kojagiri ceremony at the palace was performed according to Vedokta by Sevekari as the Rajopadhye did not attend his duties. In the tense situation, Shahu tried his best to win over the mind of Rajopadhye through a letter of 8th November 1901. Even then Rajopadhye refused, at the instigation of the Kolhapur Brahmins, to perform religious rituals in Vedokta form.<sup>80</sup> As a result Shahu appointed a Committee of three - Justice K.N. Pandit, the Chief Judge, V.B. Gokhale, the Joint Judge and Appasaheb Rajopadhye, the

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79. K.A.O., S.D.R., No. 10, 1901, No. 1839.

80. K.A.O., S.D.R., for No. 10, 1901, No. 1853.

Royal priest, to investigate the history of the Vedokta custom in the Royal family of Kolhapur.<sup>81</sup> The Brahmins in Kolhapur due to the appointment of this committee breathed freely and felt happy for it was according to them a right step <sup>of</sup> the Chhatrapati. Besides, they might have hoped <sup>also</sup> that as the first two members of the Committee were the Brahmins of high reputation and Rajopadhye the third member directly involved in the dispute, verdict would favour their rigid stand of <sup>having</sup> no right of Vedokta to Shahu Maharaja. Nothing had then happened to worsen the relations between the Brahmins and non-Brahmins upto April 1902.

During all those days, Shahu was busy with his State administration, and the preparation of his visit to England for attending the coronation of King Edward VII. The non-Brahmins and members in royal family who wanted the privilege of Vedokta rites wished <sup>to</sup> worship of God according to Vedokta, before Shahu's departure to England. Coronation date was fixed and no change in it was possible. Due to this Rajopadhye took a chance to pass days without either performing Vedokta or declaring his refusal to it. And on the 16th April 1902, the Committee of the three submitted its Report to Kolhapur Darbar, on which Rajopadhye had not signed.<sup>82</sup> On the findings of the Report it was concluded that -

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81. K.A.O., S.D.R for No. 1864

82. Ibid., No. 11, 1902, No. 1912.

- 1) the performance of the Vedokta rites at the House of Kolhapur Chhatrapati was stopped during the period of Babasaheb Maharaja in 1860.
- 2) the Chhatrapatis are the Kshatriyas according to Hindu scriptures.
- 3) most of the Vedokta rituals have been in force at the Darbar and Royal Palace.

In regard to the third conclusion, Rajopadhye protested that the information must be called <sup>on</sup> to know what type of Vedokta rites were performed at the Royal House of Satara, Udaipur, Tanjavar, Nagpur etc.<sup>83</sup> Such a demand was to allow much time to pass before Shahu's departure to England.

x|| However, as the findings made on the inquiries from the Maharaja of Baroda and others were favourable to Shahu. Even then on the insistance of Rajopadhye, Shahu asked Sawant, Ingle and M.G. Dongre to collect information as required respectively from Udaipur and Satara. Maharaja Sayajirao Gaikwad had also helped Shahu much in this respect. But when all points after such queries went in favour of Shahu, Rajopadhye <sup>b</sup>had found no other way but to neglect the call from the Darbar. It was then on the 1st of May 1902, that a show cause notice was served ~~on~~ him as to why he should not be deprived of the Inams given to him for services, on the

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83. Naik, T.B., Op.cit., p. 24.

ground that he had failed to perform his duties as ordered. Further <sup>he</sup> it was informed that failure to comply with the orders within the stipulated limit of four days, would necessitate proper, steps <sup>be</sup> being taken.<sup>84</sup> Before this official notice to Rajopadhye, Shahu himself for months was telling the royal priest personally as well as through some friends that the refusal would cost him dear and that he should agree to serve his master properly. In one of the meetings at Panhala in the early days of 1902, the Rajopadhye <sup>to</sup> told that though the Chhatrapati might be Kshatriya, the Maharaja was born in the Ghatage family of Kagal and, therefore, his request for performing Vedokta could not be granted.<sup>85</sup> Further he pointed out that the Vedokta was stopped at Kolhapur due to certain reasons and could not be restarted without the permission either of Shankaracharya or Brahmin Pandits in Kashi and, Maharaja should, before the performance of Vedokta, take oblation. <sup>11x9</sup>

Shahu's departure date for England was fixed on the 17th May 1902. Rajopadhye also wanted to avoid direct clash before that date. He, <sup>on</sup> on the 5th of May 1902, <sup>hence</sup> hence replied to Darbar that he wanted further time to consider the position he was <sup>X</sup> going to take.<sup>86</sup>

The night previous to the day of departure the last step

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84. KSG, Part IV, dated 15th May, 1902.

85. Latthe, A.B., - Op.cit., Vol. I, p. 197.

86. K.A.O., S.D.R., No. 11, 1902, No. 1915.

was taken. Khanderao Gaikwad was deputed to try for the last <sup>\*</sup> with the Rajopadhye. After the report of his failure to act, <sup>\*</sup> no alternative remained. On the 6th May 1902<sup>87</sup>, therefore, the order of resumption of the Rajopadhye's Inam was brought into effect without confiscating his landed property. And the Maharaja, without performance of the Vedokta rites, left for England on 17th May 1902.

#### TILAK IN ANTI-SHAHU MOVEMENT

Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak was growing as the national leader when the bureaucrats and Brahmins in Kolhapur began their campaign against their young Chhatrapati (Shahu Maharaja). To a man <sup>\*</sup> like his stature Kolhapur was not the place wherein he should indulge, either supporting or praising the Brahmins in Kolhapur. In no way he was related to Kolhapur as the late <sup>11/9</sup> Gopal Krishna Gokhale who was born and educated in Kolhapur. Unfortunately Gokhale, the great son of Kolhapur, was treated by Tilak as his political enemy. (Might be the real reason <sup>\*</sup> that to destroy public image of Gokhale, Tilak sought followers first from Kolhapur - the home place of Gokhale. And the Shivaji Club, already founded in 1893, was then controlled by him. Initially this Club was generously supported by the Kolhapur Darbar and as Pundalikaji Katagade said, was inspired by Shahu Maharaja.<sup>88</sup> Bapusaheb Maharaj and Mamasahab Khanvilkar

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87. KSG., Part IV, dated 6th May, 1902, p. 63.

88. Katagade, Pundalikaji - Kai. Govindrao Yalagi, p. 85.

were also the members of this Club from its inception and due to them <sup>only</sup> horses and weapons in the State custody were primarily used by the members of this Club for training and trial.

Tilak wished all the best for Shahu, on his day of assumption to power of the Kolhapur State, but never imagined that the new Chhatrapati would become a match to him in social and political affairs of Maharashtra.

It was probably <sup>in</sup> the first visit of Shahu to Poona in September 1894 as the Chhatrapati of Kolhapur that Tilak was introduced to him. Further as a ~~del~~igate secretary of the Shivaji Raja Memorial Committee, along with Babasaheb Kurundawadkar, Bapusaheb Maharaja of Kagal, Balasaheb Ichalkaranjkar, Balasaheb Bavadekar, Nagojirao Patankar, Sardar Pothis, Nani Joshi and Dr. M.G. Deshmukh, Tilak met Shahu for the first time at the Royal Palace on August 26, 1895. This was the meeting in connection with repairs of the Samadhi of Shivaji Maharaja, the founder of the Maratha power. And Shahu said <sup>to them</sup> that "Shivaji Maharaja is the original founder of the lineage and is one of our forefathers", and he "thinks his duty to arrange for the repairs of the Samadhi." <sup>89</sup> However, he told the members that the nature and amount of the help would be communicated afterwards.

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89. K.A.O. Shahu Rumal - letter dated 3rd September, 1895.

SHIVAJI CLUB

In 1895, for the first time Shivaji Club attracted attention of Kolhapur Darbar when certain unlicensed arms were detected in the possession of some of its members.<sup>90</sup> And in the case against them some of the members were convicted.<sup>91</sup> The Kolhapur Darbar paid no more attention towards the further activities of that Club. Hanmantrao Kulkarni, one of its founder members was ~~staunch~~ follower of Tilak and used to send him regularly information about the Club activities in Kolhapur.

From the celebration of the Shivaji Festival on 15th April 1896 at Poona, the Shivaji Movement of Tilak took roots deep in the minds of the educated Brahmins. In 1899, at the crisis of the plague epidemic in Kolhapur, the campaign of the evacuation of Kolhapur city gave the members of the Shivaji Club an opportunity to apply the lessons they had learnt. But some members were found in the act of theft. Then constant watch was kept on them by the Kolhapur Police and the Club was closed down.<sup>92</sup>

In fact, Bapusaheb Maharaj, the brother of Shahu was

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90. K.A.O., S.D.R. Letter dated 23rd April 1895.

91. Ibid., dated 24th March, 1910.

92. This Club was, however, revived again in 1903 at Belapur in Ahmednagar.

associated with the Club from its inception. Moreover, his name was also reported to the British as the member of the movement against the British.

The Shivaji Movement in Kolhapur was not the same as it was in Poona, although the contents of it were the same at both the places. In Kolhapur it was always stressed that due to Ramdas's guidance and blessings Shivaji founded the Maratha Empire. The starting of the "Samarth" newspaper and Samarth Vidyalaya - a school in Kolhapur - went on imbibing upon the mind of Kolhapur people that as Ramdas was to Shivaji, Vijapurkar was a guide to Kolhapur Chhatrapatis.<sup>93</sup> Shahu, however, never allowed such plans of unlimited ambitions of the Brahminical leaders. Why Vijapurkar and Tilak opposed Shahu, could also be understood from this inference.

The affairs of the Club were managed by Brahmins only like D.V. Gokhale, the <sup>?</sup>editor of Kesari, Gangadhar Nene, G.S. Palsule, S.D. Nagpurkar and others. Once by accident untimely explosion of a bomb in the custody of the Club took place in Poona and British Police traced its roots at Kolhapur. Gangadhar Rao Deshpande, a revolutionary of Belgaum, provided help and advice to the member of this Club. Naturally, British Government looked upon Shahu with suspicion. Obviously, to declare his innocence Shahu had to take certain precautionary

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93. Naik, T.B., - Op.cit., p. 65.



steps against the members of the Shivaji Club.

#### TAI MAHARAJ CASE

When Shahu was dealing with simultaneously two serious affairs, 1) the poison case of Col. Wray and 2) his claims to the Vedokta rites, the famous Tai Maharaj case began to come on the horizon. Tilak by this time had emerged as the leader of the Brahmin orthodoxy and protector of the Hindu traditions. In the month of August 1901, he felt a need of visiting Kolhapur as a trustee of the late Vasudeo Harihar Pandit alias Baba Maharaj.<sup>94</sup>

Sakwarbai alias Tai Maharaj, the wife of Baba Maharaj ordinarily used to stay along with her husband in Poona. She was pregnant when her husband died. She gave birth to a son on January 18, 1898, who died soon in March 1898. In his life time, as there was huge property, Baba Maharaj had a committee of trustees for his property. Including Raosaheb Kirtikar, the Huzur Chitnis of Chhatrapati Shahu, there were four trustees like D.S. Nagpurkar, B.G. Tilak, G.S. Khaparde and Kumbhojkar.

Considering no possibility of son's birth, although his wife was pregnant at his death time, Baba Maharaj made a will and assigned responsibility to trustees to choose a suitable boy

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94. Baba Maharaj, the Royal preceptor of the Kolhapur Chhatrapatis had held Inam villages both in British and Kolhapur territories, of which major portion was in Kolhapur State. He was suspected in the Rand Murder case and committed suicide on 7th August 1897. See KAO, SDR., No. 26, letter dated 15th August 1915.

for adoption <sup>to</sup> to his wife.

On May 29, 1901, the trustees including Tilak, decided to find whether boys were available from the Babre family in Aurangabad district and to depute Nagpurkar to make inquiries about the same. When this was proposed to Tai Maharaj, a lady of twenty years <sup>only</sup>, <sup>she</sup> suggested to send Tilak and Ganesh Shrikrishna Khaparde to Babre village to select a boy. The trustees, however, added that "Shri Tai Maharaj should go, see boys and approve". This was signed by three trustees to which Nagpurkar added a note correcting certain statements in the recorded proceedings as -

"In connection with the matter, the late Shri Baba Maharaj had at the time of making his will just before his death, distinctly told Mr. Bal Gangadhar Tilak that if the necessity for taking a son in adoption arose, a boy of the family of Shri <sup>only</sup> and not from outside should be adopted. Tilak agreed to this but that point has not been considered. Further that Shri Tai Maharaj has expressed the opinion that she approved of Shri Bal Maharaj and that therefore he should be adopted, had not been entered in resolution because the above named three (trustees) disapproved of it. As I have written (the resolution) as Mr. Tilak told me to write, I feel the necessity of writing this note when affixing my signature. I have informed the trustees that it is clear that the

family at Bhore (Babre) is not of the family of Shri<sup>95</sup>

But in the court of law when civil suit was filed known as Tai Maharaj case, Tilak told that this note was false and that Baba Maharaj "omitted these words expressly from the will at the time because Mr. Tilak told ~~him~~ to add them". However, people from other side and Nagpurkar, a trustee, never believed the words of Tilak.<sup>96</sup>

As planned earlier by the trustees, Tai Maharaj went to Aurangabad accompanied by Tilak instead of Nagpurkar, to see and select some boy either from there or else where. And Tilak <sup>9x11</sup> compelled her to adopt the boy Jagannath, there only. Then after the complete execution of the adoption deed on 27th June 1901, she wrote to the natural father of the adoptee that <sup>9x</sup> "I shall not take any one but him (i.e. his son) in adoption". From this it is evident that against her will she was forced by Tilak to adopt Jagannath Maharaj. Immediately, therefore, after her return to Poona, she complained to the District Judge and Agent to Sardars about what had happened at Aurangabad.

Tai Maharaj, further applied from Poona to Shahu

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95 Latthe, A.B., - op.cit, Vol. I., p. 274.

96 Ibid, p. 275.

Chhatrapati on July 10, 1901 for permission to adopt Bala Maharaj, the brother of Pandit Maharaj. The Kolhapur Darbar instantly sent its sanction. Moreover Bala Maharaj on his part also prior consent to the adoption got permission from the Chhatrapati and the Political Agent of Kolhapur.<sup>97</sup> On 18th August Tilak gave to Shahu a full account of the affair and made a final appeal to <sup>x? dissuade</sup> disallow Tai Maharaj from <sup>her</sup> plans of <sup>another</sup> adoption. As a duty Shahu gave a patient hearing to Tilak but did not commit himself to any view. Meanwhile Tai Maharaj adopted (late in the afternoon on 19th August) one Bala Maharaja, the young brother of Guru Maharaj in Kolhapur.<sup>98</sup> She had neither followed the advice of the trustee nor waited for the final reply from the Darbar. Tilak also learnt the news on that day before his departure for Poona. To Tilak it was a matter of surprise that the interview with the Maharaja did not make him aware of the adoption ceremony held on 19th August. From the view point of the Maharaja, it was not his concern to let Tilak, the client, know the plans of the opposite party. To this <sup>x?</sup> Tilak had taken as a deliberate attempt of Maharaja and began to bruise the Chhatrapati for whom he had wished all the best throughout his life.

Sanction to adoption of Jagannath Maharaj was not only to discredit Tilak, but to disown him from the huge property

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97. Keer, Dhananjay - Op.cit., p. 87.

98. K.A.O., S.D.R., No. 10. 1901 - Letter of August 21, 1901.

of Baba Maharaj. The intention of Tilak to have the control of that property was fair. As a politician he wanted monetary help for his anti-British revolutionary activities. By the adoption of his choice, certainly that property would have become as Mr. Naik has told, an asset to him.<sup>99</sup> A letter dated 12th July 1902 from Lord Northcote, the Governor of Bombay to the Secretary of State for India also throws light on Tilak's attitude as -

"The matter was apparently passing off quietly when Mr. Bal Gangadhar Tilak, who had gone to Kolhapur in connection with an adoption case in the family of the late Baba Maharaj which was then before the District Judge of Poona and in connection with which there are now charges of perjury and forgery against him, finaling<sup>9</sup> the question of adoption settled in opposition to his wishes in the matter, intervened and stiffened the agitators against His Highness, the Maharaja and gained advocate for them in Poona, thus making the question more general and a sort of trial obtained between Brahmins and the Marathas."<sup>100</sup>

Thus Tilak's involvement in the Tai Maharaj case made him to take any action for strengthening his role and securing

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99. Naik, T.B., - Op.cit., p. 84.

100. NAI., New Delhi, - Bombay, Kolhapur Branch, Foreign Department, Internal, Confidential L.N. 5432, Bombay Castel, 12th July, 1902.

victory to him. It was then not the question <sup>2</sup> (to) whom he was opposing. To achieve this end, he wanted help and at that time Brahmins also needed his help. Finally Tilak won the case in 1915.<sup>101</sup>

Any way, beginning of any problem is important. If Tilak had no connections with the Tai Maharaj case, his participation in the Vedokta affair would have become impossible and the whole history of Tilak-Shahu feud would have no revengeful ~~A~~ reaction on both the Brahmins and non-Brahmins.

#### VEDOKTA AFTER SHAHU'S RETURN FROM ENGLAND

While in England on his coronation trip the most sensational order was issued by Shahu granting 50 per cent reservations to backward classes. The rift between the Brahmins and him or the non-Brahmins was again more widened. Brahmins in Kolhapur in absentia of the Maharaja from Kolhapur had planned in numerous ways to take control of the situation in Kolhapur. The acting Chief Judge R.R. Shirgaonkar reported of this situation on 27th June 1902 to the Maharaja that "the Brahmins are as usual very troublesome and arrogant and it has become very difficult for us to bear with them. I would therefore most earnestly request Your Highness to return here as early as you can."<sup>102</sup> Meanwhile, on August 23, 1902, against the

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101. Pawar, R.K., Bhagawan Shri Shahu Chhatrapati Maharaj Yanche Awatar, p. 84.

102. Ibid., p. 84.

order of the Maharaja, of the resumption of the Inam, Rajopadhye had made an appeal to the State Council, which was rejected by it.<sup>103</sup> The Brahmins in Kolhapur, therefore, thought to seek help from outside. On the 31st of August 1902, Shahu returned to Kolhapur from England. And in spite of the curse of the Brahmins, his health was fine and nothing wrong had happened to him. "There was no question of the Brahmins welcoming the Maharaja back to Kolhapur. On the contrary, the disgruntled and the Tilakites from Poona tried to set up an opposition and mar the reception, but they failed and ~~failed~~ ignobly."<sup>104</sup>

And after accepting the receptions at Kolhapur as it was customary for the member of the royal family to pay homage to the Gods, he boldly refusing the Brahminical request for penance, visited Gods and Goddesses. Brahmins were naturally displeased very much. R.P. Karandikar from Satara and M.R. Bodas, one who worked once as the assistant editor of Kesari had in the absentia of the Maharaja from Kolhapur, had done their utmost to help Rajopadhye. Balasaheb Natu, a notorious ultra-reactionary Brahmin from Poona and many others of his views had become famous as reactionaries. Tilak said of Natu that his was the family - ancestors of which were responsible for the ruin

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103. a) Naik, T.B., - Op. cit., p. 27.

b) K.S.G., The Council Resolution dated 3rd August, 1902.

104. Keer, Dhananjay, - Shahu Chhatrapati, p. 122.

of the Peshwas and expected his role to <sup>x</sup>ruin also Kolhapur Chhatrapatis.<sup>105</sup> And when the Maharaja was in England, here in Kolhapur some of the Brahmins did everything possible to frighten the royal members at the Palace. Among one of such incidents was the marks of the finger print of the blood wetted hand on the New Palace Walls. Threats were also given to kill Shahu Maharaja.<sup>106</sup> But he was very strong and rational and did not believe <sup>of</sup> any of such threats of the Brahmins and did not believe in the power that the Brahmins had to curse anyone.

Suddenly, on the 14th September 1902, the adoptive mother of Shahu Maharaja, Anandibai died of acute pains in stomach. Immediately Rajopadhye declared that it was the effect of the curse, that the Brahmins <sup>x</sup>willed.<sup>107</sup> Not only that, but the Kolhapur Brahmins opposed the last rites of the late Anandibai, the mother of their Chhatrapati, according to Vedokta forms<sup>108</sup> saying - "Who shall perform the obsequies of a woman who is a Shudra ?."<sup>109</sup> This was very horrible, and <sup>x</sup>because of himself in grief, Shahu had to gulp it coolly.

Even after this, the Brahminical efforts to <sup>x?</sup>press Shahu were not to be ended. To threaten by the so called power of

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105. Keer, Dhananjay, - Shahu Chhatrapati, p. 124.

106. Pawar, R.K., - Op.cit., p. 84.

107. Naik, T.B., - Op.cit., p. 26.

108. Pawar, R.K., Op.cit., p. 85.

109. Keer, Dhananjay, - Shahu Chhatrapati, p. 124.



their curse, to all the people - the royal members in the Palace and the non-Brahmins in the city, - on the very night of 14th September, some of the firebrands among the Brahmins set fire to the old Palace of Kolhapur. The cries of the people aroused due to that havoc awaken Shahu soon. He rushed to the spot immediately and found that a fire had broken out in the Palace surrounded on one side by the old records and on the other the granary and the other stores of an inflammable nature.<sup>110</sup> Colonel Ferris and Major Burkes helped the situation and the fire was extinguished. To the Brahmins, this incidence was more than sufficient to repeat their pet theories of their cursing power and the death story of Gaga Bhatt. There was thus no end to the Brahmin misdeeds, but the Maharaja was not to be frightened by those. The Brahmins in those days were the great believers on such potential powers of them like that of curse. While discussing their misdeeds with Diwan Sabnis immediately after his mother's death Shahu said that he was not to be deterred by such superstitions.<sup>111</sup>

#### THE END OF RAJOPADHYE CASE

To decide the Rajopadhye case, Vijapurkar proposed through his Granthamala of September 1902, to appoint a committee consisted of R.G. Bhandarkar, Kathvate, V.K. Rajwade, Arte, Agashe, Bhadkamkar, Pendase, among which two were scholars in

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110. Latthe, A.B., - Op.cit., Vol. I, pp. 200-201

111. Ibid., p. 201.

Hindu scriptures and two in Western culture. But before arriv- 11x? ing to its possibility of existence, Rajopadhye submitted an appeal to the Political Agent, Col. Ferris about the cancellation of the Maharaja's order of abolishing his Vatans and Inams. To his illfate, Col. Ferris rejected his appeal on 19th February 1903, on the ground that it did not come under his jurisdiction and the powers of the Maharaja were the final in civil and criminal matters of his State.<sup>112</sup> This was a great rebuff to the priestly class in Kolhapur. Even then they could not understand their position and Rajopadhye was made to submit his appeal to the Bombay Government. To increase the tragedies of Rajopadhye, the verdict of the Bombay Government also went against him upholding the views of Col. Ferris. Then Rajopadhye finally submitted his petition to the Government of India. And in May 1905, Lord Curzon's Government at the Centre rejected Rajopadhye's appeal upholding the decision of Kolhapur Darbar.<sup>113</sup> Rajopadhye and his Brahmin supporters in Maharashtra felt very much injured. As a general opinion of the Brahmins, Kesari described that decision as unjust and shameless. Further at the end of its editorial, it observed that the people would have been very jubilant if the Kolhapur State would be annexed to British territory.<sup>114</sup> This ~~was~~ how Tilak and his Kesari were working

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112. K.A.O., S.D.R., No. 12, A.D. 1903, Nos. 2062 to 2214 No. 2072.

113. Ibid., No. 14, A.D. 1905, Nos. 2544 to 2705, No. 2601.

114. Kesari, June 6, 1905.

against the Maharaja. Was it rational to demand annexation of a native State on the issue of the abolition of Vatan ? and was it not the duty of Rajopadhye to serve the palace for which purpose the grant of Vatan was made ? In fact it was a duty of 'Kesari', as an instrument of public power, to ask or teach Rajopadhye to do his duties first. Instead, it opposed the stand of the Maharaja.

#### THE LOKAPRATINIDHI SABHA

The Lokapratinidhi Sabha or People's Representative Assembly was actually formed in Kolhapur about the year of 1885-86. From its inception the Sabha did some concrete work through its petition to the Kolhapur Darbar. But in reality, its existence was little known to even Kolhapur people.<sup>115</sup> After the ceremony of the accession to power of Shahu Maharaja, the Sabha honoured the new Maharaja by offering its loyalty to him through a letter of his praise. Mostly all the members of the Sabha were Brahmins. From the beginning of the Vedokta controversy and especially after the abolition of the Vatan of Rajopadhye in 1903, some English educated Brahmins in Kolhapur thought to have an association to represent their views. In June 1902 an attempt was also made without success to call a Conference of Inamdars to consider steps of the Maharaja.

Then in 1906, they planned to have such a Conference under

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115. Naik, T.B., - Op.cit., p. 63.

the People's Representative Assembly and invited G.K. Gokhale, the member of the Viceroy's Council. Gokhale, however, knowing the ill-will of the members of this Sabha, against the Kolhapur Darbar and Kagal Jahagir, refused to attend it, and the whole plan to make a show of the all India representative body of the Sabha and to press<sup>7</sup> the Maharaja<sup>8</sup> was collapsed.<sup>116</sup>

#### ORDERS TO FOLLOW VEDOKTA RITUALS

Under a threat, misdeeds of persons in bureaucracy can be corrected, but no power was there on earth either to control and check the misdeeds of the Brahmins or to make them right.<sup>x</sup> Shahu did take<sup>x</sup> the task as his moral responsibility and was prepared to pay any cost for his rational actions against the rigid religious stand of the Brahmins. The fight was thus, growing wild. Accordingly, on the 12th of November 1902, an order for practising the Vedokta rituals was published in the Kolhapur Gazette, asking the people that - "In villages, the marriages of Tulashi plant in the courtyards of the Government officers, so also worship of Apata (a religious plant-tree for the Hindus, of which leaves and branches on the day of Dasara are called<sup>x</sup> as gold) and worships of various gods are performed<sup>x?</sup> by the Vedokta regularly. However, if such worships are not performed by the Vedokta, the Mamlatdars are ordered to make Government priests to perform all such worships by the Vedokta

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116. Naik, T.B., - p. 64.

way."<sup>117</sup>

This was a thunderbolt to the Brahmins. Now all those who had Inams had either to submit to the order of the Maharaja or prepare themselves for the consequences for not following the order and join the flock of the reactionary Brahmins. A strange as well as an unexpected problem was posed before the Brahmins. They realised now that Shahu at any cost, was not to yield them by ordinary means and threats. They, therefore, found out then their old way in new disguise to spread rumours that "if the Brahmins give up to stay in the State of the Maharaja, his kingdom would be destroyed as it was happened in the past" that Shivaji and his sons' life was cut off by death and Gaga Bhatt who performed the coronation by the Vedokta way also died accidentally only because of their unnecessary insistence on the practice of the Vedokta.<sup>118</sup> And many of the Brahmins left also at least for temporary purposes the Kolhapur State. To their tragedy the second order was issued by Shahu for executing the Vedokta the form at palace and failure to this order was to cause the forfeiture of the salaries of priests who received those from the Government.<sup>119</sup> This was how the counter-action was taken by him to force the Brahmins for performing worships according to Vedokta.

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117. K.S.G., Huzur Resolution No. 169, dated 12th November, 1902.

118. Pawar, K.R., - Op.cit., p. 87.

119. Ibid., p. 87.

ANTI-SHAHU STAND OF SHANKARACHARYA

When both the parties were <sup>x</sup>thus in high time of the Vedokta crisis, a problem relating to the property of the Shankaracharya, the spiritual master of the Hindus, was brought before the Maharaja.

This Math of Kolhapur was established by the 44th Shankaracharya known as Swami Vidyashankar on the perpetual insistence of the Vijayanagar King Raja Krishnaraya. The Shankaracharya of Karveer Math used to stay for some time at Sankeshwar in the Belgaum district. The major portion of the landed property of the Math was granted as Inam by the Kolhapur Chhatrapatis although it had some of it from the British district of Belgaum. In August of 1863, according to the agreement between the Kolhapur Chhatrapatis and the Shankaracharya of the Karveer Math, it was laid down that no disciple (Shishya) - an heir to the Math should be appointed without getting sanction from the Kolhapur Darbar. Secondly, it was also decided that the property and Inams of the Math should not be mortgaged.<sup>120</sup>

The Kolhapur Branch of the Shankaracharya claimed their jurisdiction over the whole territory between the Malaprabha <sup>x</sup>on the South and the Himalayas <sup>x</sup>on the north.<sup>121</sup> In the time

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120. Naik, T.B., - Op.cit., p. 30.

121. Latthe, A.B., - Op.cit., Vol. II, p. 229.

of Shivaji Chhatrapati, the privileges of the Math remained  
 ★ unhammered. Under the Peshwas, they became again firm and  
 permanent. Fortunately under the British there was no  
 trouble to the Math. However, the great traditions of learning  
 had vanished in the course of time and it became a centre of  
 enjoyment for the relations of the Shankaracharya and others.  
 In spite of this fact the Math enjoyed as before its powers to  
 govern the Hindus and dispense with<sup>8</sup> justice in extra judicial  
 matters. To maintain again its mythical power, highly educated  
 Brahmins helped it by appearing before it as supplicants for  
 Justice. Men like Justice Ranade and Lokmanya Tilak pleaded  
 their defence in the Court of the Kolhapur Swami, before whom  
 they were, as Latthe told, "arraigned in the early nineties  
 for the offence of drinking tea in the Panch Haud Mission of  
 Poona."<sup>122</sup>

Sons, daughters and relatives of the Swami had almost  
 removed all the articles of gold, silver or gil~~k~~ from the  
Math. Not only that,<sup>★</sup> but for their enjoyment in the name of  
 the Math debts were also incurred. "A sum exceeding Rs. 8,000  
 and originally paid to one of the Swami's sons of an amount  
 to be later accounted for, was finally written off as a "loss"  
 in 1895". Many times adopting different names as "Joshis,  
 sometimes Bhilawadikars, sometimes, Jyotish<sup>★</sup>, at times Buva

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122. Latthe, A.B., Op.cit., Vol. II, p. 231.

123. Ibid., p. 232.

and often Gosavis",<sup>123</sup> They actually looted the wealth of the Math. All such facts were brought to the notice of the Maharaja by the end of 1900 A.D.

About the time of 1901, Vasudeo Shastri Bhilawadikar was the Shankaracharya and the relatives of the earlier four swamis were in close contact with Bhilawadikar Swami. The property of the Math, therefore, had become the estate of them. Both, a brother and a manager of Bhilawadikar had appealed to Belgaum Collector and Kolhapur Darbar for distribution of the Math's property as it was lying in both the regions. As a small portion was there in the Belgaum jurisdiction, the Collector of that district asked the Swami to settle his own affairs properly. The Kolhapur Darbar, as it had under its control the major portion and bound by the Agreement of 1863, as well as that of the earliest, made the inquiries and found an amount of gross misappropriation of property.

In the meanwhile, due to old age, Bhilawadikar Shankaracharya thought to appoint a disciple (Shishya) and having doubt in mind for getting <sup>n</sup>saction from the Kolhapur Darbar, he went to stay at Sankeshwar. From there he directly contacted one Kashinath Buva Brahmanalkar and got approval for his adoption and appointment as Shishya from the Sangli Maharaja who had actually no connections with the Math. This Kashinath Buva Brahmanalkar had already won the favour of Lokmanya Tilak and was a rigid Brahmin in his outlook.



Indirectly this was a new challenge to the Chhatrapati.<sup>124</sup> Moreover Shankaracharya Bhilawadikar had another disciple known as Athanikar Shastri who looked after the Math at Sankeshwar.

Kashinath Buva Brahmanalkar was made successor and heir with the consent of Sangli Maharaja on 23rd February 1903. This was against the Agreement of 1863. Naturally <sup>then</sup> while deciding the petition submitted by a brother and a manager of Bhilawadikar, the issue was brought to the notice of the Maharaja. So, Bhilawadikar made an application to the Kolhapur Darbar for sanction <sup>to</sup> adoption of Kashinath Shastri Brahmanalkar. But as no previous sanction was sought, the application was dismissed, and the property of the Math was conditionally confiscated in accordance with the provisions of the Agreement of 1863. The property was to remain under <sup>the</sup> State control till <sup>an</sup> installation of a disciple with the sanction of the Maharaja.<sup>125</sup>

How Shahu felt of this affair can be understood in his own words <sup>as</sup> —

"Another question has now cropped up which is creating a great stir. I mean <sup>the</sup> withholding my sanction to the new Jagadguru. --- The Jagadguru occupies only the position of a trustee and cannot give away or mortgage

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124. Pawar, K.R., Op.cit., p. 97.

125. Ibid.

his estate and yet he has done both. In order to prevent such abuse, the Darbar thought it necessary to exercise control in the choice of a successor to the seat of Shankaracharya just as the Mysore Darbar has done in the case of Shringeri Swami who is considered even of greater importance than the occupant of this Math. I have heard that the Swami is not going to stir personally in this matter but, which is worse, will create agitation throughout the Deccan and force my hands indirectly. The Ns<sup>126</sup> of Poona will, of course, assist him heart and soul for two reasons - firstly, because they are his creditors and will lose the villages held by them as they know that the property of the Swami is of the nature of a trust, and secondly, they will lose the ecclesiastical power over which they have now an indirect control. Thus the present case <sup>x?</sup> was caused greater discontent among the B.<sup>127</sup> Community, especially as the ecclesiastical power will slip from the hands of the Tilak and Natu's party."<sup>128</sup>

Thus, when the Jagadguru was following the illegal<sup>x</sup> lines, the Kolhapur Brahmins raised before him the issue of the right of the Vedokta <sup>x</sup> to the Chhatrapatis. As expected<sup>x</sup> of him, they got his opinion that the Chhatrapatis were not entitled to the

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126. The Natu and company of Lokmanya Tilak.

127. 'B' stands for Brahmins.

128. Latthe, A.B., Op.cit., Vol. II, pp. 234-235.

right of the Kshatriyaship. And the Brahmin world in the Deccan applauded him in an unprecedented manner.<sup>129</sup>

The Swami now was deprived of the property in Kolhapur, his stay along with his ex-Swami Bhilawadikar at Sankeshwar became economically difficult. But in the flocks of the rigid Brahmins Brahmanalkar Shastri had become very famous as the opponent of the Kolhapur Chhatrapati. It was planned, therefore, that he should go on tours in Maharashtra to screw out as much money as possible from the public on the support of Brahmin followers. To this, Guru Bhilawadikar also consented with a view that Brahmanalkar would send him some surplus money. And true to this plan, he went to Poona, where Lokmanya Tilak himself received and gave a purse to him.<sup>130</sup> Soon recreations, processions, feet-worships, theological expositions and donations came in quick succession all over Maharashtra. Brahmanalkar Swami, the arch opponent of the Kolhapur Chhatrapati was upheld as a great hero and money and gifts were poured before him. But he did not send any of the shares - especially money - to his old Guru, Bhilawadikar Maharaj. The Guru, therefore, turned his eyes to the lost Inam in Kolhapur and the accumulated profits therefrom, which the Darbar held under attachment. He, soon, requested Brahmanalkar on 5th December 1903 to allow him to decide the

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129. Latthe, A.B., - Op.cit. Vol. II, p. 235.

130. Keer, Dhananjay, - Shahu Chhatrapati, p. 138.

Vedokta affair. But receiving no replies from Brahmanalkar, Bhilawadikar Maharaj himself opened negotiations with the Maharaja. Then coming on his own at Kalamba, a village at a distance of barely two miles from Kolhapur, he had discussions with Shahu from 15th to 22nd of June 1904. During that period, on the last day, Bhilawadikar Maharaj gave the dress of honour, and Ashirwad i.e. blessings in the true Vedokta way to Shahu Maharaja and expected of him to hand over the properties of the Math to him - Bhilawadikar himself. But as it was the property in dispute, the Chhatrapati asked Bhilawadikar to have consent for his deeds from Brahmanalkar Swami, his so called successor.

Then Bhilawadikar returned in great disappointment to Sankeshwar, and after a few days saw Lokmanya Tilak pleading on behalf of Brahmanalkar Maharaj. And to his surprise and the surprise of all, without any notice Brahmanalkar Shankaracharya came to Herle - a village to the east of Kolhapur, and on the 10th July 1905 declared that the Kolhapur Chhatrapatis were the Kshatriyas and they had full rights to the Vedokta rituals.<sup>131</sup>

Thus, the sanction of Brahmanalkar to Vedokta rights of the Maharaja cleared the way and he had been granted the property of the Math by the Kolhapur Darbar. Bhilawadikar Maharaj naturally grew envious of Brahmanalkar and on

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131. Latthe, A.B., - Op.cit., Vol. II, p. 239.

November 13, 1905, issued a notice cancelling the powers he had given to Brahmanalkar. Brahmanalkar was not to yield to such a notice. He replied that after having nominated him as a Jagadguru, the Guru had no power to withdraw and the notice was ultra vires. In April 1906, as Latthe had told<sup>\*</sup>, the irresponsible Guru convicted Brahmanalkar on the offence of disobedience and sentenced him to ex-communication and dismissed him from office.<sup>132</sup>

During all those days of crisis, some broad minded Brahmins, like the Balasaheb Maharaj of Kurundawadkar sided, and helped Shahu to their best. And V.G. Vijapurkar, who was anti-Vedokta rights, found himself in a very critical situation. In 1905, with a great disappointment he reviewed the whole story of Vedokta affair in his Granthamala and in the same article concluded - "The so-called religious newspapers in Poona had also (due to the favourable decision of the Vedokta to the Kolhapur Maharaja) given no proper directions in this issue. Those who teased<sup>x?</sup> the demand of the Vedokta rights, called the demand irreligious and not based on the Shastras i.e. scriptures and held the Shishya - Swami, Bhilawadikar and Brahmanalkar as the greatest hero and protector of Hinduism and treated them as Gods, both of them are not speaking about the truth; one of them remained silent and

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132. Latthe, A.B., Op.cit. Vol. II, p. 242.

the other turned<sup>\*</sup> his side ! All this was a climax of contradictions and madness.<sup>133</sup>

In 1917, after the death of Brahmanalkar, Kurtakoti, a foreign<sup>\*</sup> returned great scholar, was selected<sup>\*</sup> to that honour of Sh<sup>n</sup>karacharya. At<sup>\*</sup> the beginning, Kurtakoti showed his favour of Vedokta rights to all Hindus and started in Kolhapur a school "Chhatrapati Sanskrit Vidyalaya" but refused soon<sup>\*</sup> permission to an untouchable - Mahar - student of Miss Clarke Hostel, of listing<sup>x?</sup> a Sanskrit speech of a Shastri.<sup>134</sup> When in 1918 Shahu Maharaja applied the enactment of the abolition of Kulkarni Vatans to his village also, on 15th September 1918, he resigned the<sup>x?</sup> honour of Shankaracharya and joined the movement against the Maharaja.

#### CONCLUSION

Thus, the affairs, the Vedokta, Shivaji Club, Tai Maharaja Case, People's Representative Assembly and the Sankeshwar Math were mainly of the Brahmin priests, leaders and people. Shahu Maharaja was involved directly or indirectly as the Chhatrapati of Kolhapur in all these affairs. A constant & || and clear-cut line of a link what we observe is that the main parties involved in all these affairs were very influential in the social and political life of Maharashtra and their

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133. Naik, T.B., - Op.cit., p. 35.

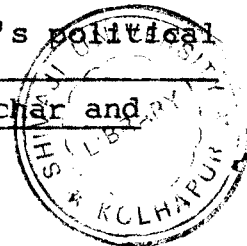
134. Ibid., p. 38.

words had weight in the matters of religious reforms. They were all conservative and against any reforms. ~~Although~~ they were at the same time fighting for India's freedom, ~~but~~ their loyalty to the Maharaja of Kolhapur, a native ruler of their kith and kin was very much doubtful and what they wanted by hook or crook, was their domination over the Kolhapur State and the masses. ~~And~~ at the same time they wanted others to tolerate their domination. This, of course, was not the fair game, the bureaucrats and the Brahmins played in Kolhapur against the Maharaja.

So far, ~~the~~ Vedokta rights to the Marathas and the Maharaja were concerned, the problem to learned men and leader like Tilak should not have been so difficult. Specially when Tilak needed united strength of the Indians for the fight against the British, he should have been the first to grant all religious rights not only to the Marathas, but to those also who were deprived of them. Again, Kolhapur was not so much important in size and weight that a leader of all India level ~~like~~ like him should take interest in such affairs of the Kolhapur State. Thirdly, all those Brahmin leaders in Kolhapur and from some part of Maharashtra ever took interest only in the problems of the Brahmins and not of other people. Basically it appears, they had not understood the importance of human relations and the currents of the changing world towards modernity. The activities carried out by the Brahmin priests and leaders in

Kolhapur and Maharashtra as a whole, were to lead them to the fate they witnessed as nobody among them had vision or power either to change the direction of their action and lead them to conquer not only the minds of one Maharaja, but all and all the people in India. It seems that in support of the Brahminical stand, Lokmanya Tilak had forgotten the national interest. The late G.M. Madkholkar, a writer, thinker and journalist of eminence had, therefore, rightly commented on Tilak's anti-Shahu stand, that "Tilak unnecessarily adopted, even against his own will, an unhistoric, shortsighted, and intolerant policy to turn the Vedokta affair to worst, and lost the support and cooperation of freedom loving self-respected princes like Sayajirao Gaikwad and Shahu Maharaja. Due to that again the Brahmin-non-Brahmin strife took place to arrest the progress of Maharashtra."<sup>135</sup> A contemporary of Shahu and Tilak, and one of the social revolutionaries and writers, the late Prabodhankar alias K.S. Thakare while writing on the birth anniversary of Lokmanya Tilak, stated that "Shahu Maharaja had only directly brought up the progress of the non-Brahmins - Bahujan Samaj, and not Tilak. Both the great men were contemporary, but at two different poles. Tilak had strongly opposed Shahu's non-Brahmin organisation (Brahmanetar) and the social and educational movements for its upliftment. But, nowhere it is found that Shahu had obstructed Tilak's political

135. Bhosale, S.S. (Ed.) - Rajarshi Shahu - Kal, Vichar and Karya, p. 283.





efforts for India's freedom."<sup>136</sup> A great educationalist, the late V.D. Ghatge wrote in his autobiography about the Vedokta affair that "Shahu Maharaja and the Maratha people of his times were firm to their demand of the Vedokta rights, but it was not against the Brahmins. In fact they wanted the Vedokta rights from the Brahmins and were requesting to them, only to call to themselves (the Maratha) as the Kshatriya. They were not keeping the Brahmins aside. On the contrary they were seeking the Vedokta rights accepting the greatness of the Brahmins - Brahmanya and the Chaturvarnya form of Hinduism."<sup>137</sup> "To Shahu Maharaja also", however, as had been pointed out by a great Royist, the late Govardhan Parikh, "the dispute over the Vedokta rights, was not so important. The arrogant attitude that the Brahmins adopted in those days had insulted him terribly. One cannot neglect this side also. And support of Tilak to such an attitude of the Brahmins made his (Tilak's) role critical."<sup>138</sup> Thus the Vedokta affair, with all other affairs like the Shivaji Club, Tai Maharaja Case and the Shankaracharya Math, brought Tilak against Shahu Maharaja the one who was basically seeking the progress of all the people, irrespective of their castes and religions.

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136. Maharashtra Times - dated 2nd August 1970.

137. Ghatge, V.D., - Divas Ase Hote ( Autobiography), p. 294.

138. Salunkhe, P.B., - Shahu Gaurav Granth, p. 403.

## C H A P T E R - IV

### ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS AND ADMINISTRATION IN KOLHAPUR

#### Introduction :

Administrative policy, generally in a monarchical form of Government, cannot do justice to all subjects unless the ruler is wise, prudent and capable enough to grasp the various currents and cross currents in social and political life of the State. A king, however, cannot go ahead with his plans unless he finds favourable atmosphere and co-operation from all sections of his subjects. In regard to the people of Kolhapur, it was the matter of fortune, in those days that their new Maharaja, Shahu Chhatrapati was well trained in the Administrative Affairs under the able guidance of Sir S.M. Fraser, an I.C.S. man. Theoretically he was well brought up, in the subjects of his State Administration and was also given some practical lessons in important subjects like Judiciary and Revenue. And only after adequate training the day of his installation was fixed.

At the arduous functions of the Investiture ceremony on the 2nd April 1894, Shahu Maharaja, discharged his own part very ably. After the function was over, as is the British custom, he proposed a toast to Harris, the then Governor of Bombay. The

Governor then, in reply to the toast, said that - "The manly tone of Your Highness's speeches, the excellent matter contained in them and the systematic tone which pervades them, will, I feel sure, satisfy all who have heard them, that the State of Kolhapur may look forward to one who will bear himself as a Prince ought before his subjects and at the same time will not be above interesting himself in their meanest affairs.(Applause)". Thus while showing his happiness, the Governor continued, "It has been my good fortune to have made your acquaintance from my earliest entry into this Presidency and it has been a sincere pleasure to me to notice how rapidly the strength of your mind has developed, how keen is now the interest you take in public affairs and how clear is the perception you have formed on many subjects which I have discussed with you. I augur from this that in the important work you have now to undertake, you will bring these qualities to bear with the result, that your subjects may look up to one who, when their affairs are before him will, as an official should weigh each side - calmly in the balance in order that he may arrive at a just and fair conclusion".<sup>1</sup>

Then assuring the Kolhapur subjects, in the course of his installation speech, young Shahu Chhatrapati made it clear in the course of his talk that "as regards my people while recognising all that has already been done and the favourable circumstances under which I begin my rule, at the same time, I understand

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1. RGAK., for 1893-94, P. 9.

fully that in Government there is no standing still, that a serious and solemn task lies before me, not only to preserve for my subjects the benefits they already enjoy, but to ensure further steady progress in the promotion of their welfare".<sup>2</sup>

\*|But things at Kolhapur were not at proper pegs. The prestige and glories of the immortal House of Shivaji were reduced to a very low level. Ideals of an ideal State of Shivaji, were totally forgotten. After the appointment of the Karbhari, the Administrator in Kolhapur, the revenues of the State amounted to no more than three lakhs, while the ordinary expenditure exceeded one and a half times as much and debts amounted to many times the normal revenue to the State.<sup>3</sup> Besides other avenues of expenditure were unlimited and unending.

The worst of the situation in Kolhapur was brought under control by Major Graham,<sup>4</sup> the first Political Superintendent of Kolhapur. But the revision of the Treaty with the British in 1862, then the untimely death of the VII Chhatrapati Babasaheb Maharaj in 1866 weakened the State Administration. Then the minority Rule of Rajaram and Shivaji IV under whose periods,<sup>5</sup> Agency and Regency Council administrations were introduced as described earlier in the II Chapter<sup>5</sup>, made Kolhapur, the centre of internal intrigues and caste conspiracies.

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2. Ibid., P.7

3. Latthe, A.B., - Op.cit., Vol.I, P.14.

4. Major Graham managed the Kolhapur Administration from 1851 A.D. to 1854.

5. Chapter II, P.46.

Shahu found, after taking over his administration, no whole hearted co-operation from the native and European officials. In fact it was the prime duty of all the native officers to strengthen the rule of the new Chhatrapati. Instead they were on the one hand praising the rule of Shivaji and on the other, abusing Shahu through their non-cooperation. To Shahu, it was not only the question of their non-cooperation but their negligence of their duties and creating hardships to subjects. No king, desiring to seek good of his people, would remain silent and allow his bureaucracy to go like the manner it wanted.

Shahu's education and training under the British officials-cum-teachers like Fitz Gerald and S.M.Fraser, opened for him new avenues of knowledge. European teachers could not teach any Indian student without citing good examples or references from European History. In regard to Shahu, as he was a king and they were to prepare him to be fit for his Royal duties,<sup>6</sup> it would have been certainly the matter of their interest, to acquaint Shahu with the noble ideas of a king in Europe - like Alfred the Great and others. So also unavoidable incidence might have not<sup>8</sup> gone therein discussions without a comparison between the European and the Indian situations. All the more, it was just possible for the teachers to create an ideal image of an Indian King before Shahu. This is what we do not find in the letters of S.M.Fraser but smell through his speeches.<sup>7</sup>

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6. Latthe, A.B., Op.cit., p.32

7. Latthe, A.B., Op.cit., Vol.II, PP.632 to 633.

SHAHU AS AN ADMINISTRATOR

Shahu Chhatrapati had before him, the first and foremost duty to work as the master and the ablest administrator of his State. He had to see, therefore, not only the working of various departments under him, but to frame policies, execute the decisions and perform certain duties daily as the Chhatrapati. At the age of twenty, while so young in appearance and inexperienced in administration, he began to shoulder the responsibilities of his State as the Monarch with confidence and prompt."

From the very beginning of his rule he had to face numerous difficulties. On the one hand he was primarily concerned <sup>x</sup>to the restoration of State powers from the Council Administrative set up ~~to~~ to his own that is the newly formed set up of the Chhatrapati Rule. On the other, he had to face the difficulties that the bureaucrats in the State service created to challenge his authority. With all this, to what he was highly concerned was daily routine that a Chhatrapati had to perform. Accordingly ~~after the ceremonies and rejoicing being over, he first~~ <sup>x</sup> gave a visit to his Darbar-Court and the Secretariate on the day of his assumption of power. From the next day, his daily programme was fixed just as the school time table without any off period. Early in the morning he was to get up, had his <sup>x</sup>personal work done, prayers performed and attend most probably every day, his Royal office from morning times.

What is most important is that he wanted to get first hand informations <sup>(s)</sup> rather than relying upon information reaching him

through the official channels.<sup>8</sup> The piles which bureaucrats create and colour do not help the masses either way to solve practical problems as well as to reduce the burden of taxes on the subjects. Moreover, domination in the Kolhapur State namely of the British and Brahmins, not only looked at the interests of their respective sections, but refused also to pay required attention to the problems of the masses. The State tours arranged prior to his accession to power had revealed him the correct understanding of the difference between the bureaucrats and hardships of the masses. From the very start, he, therefore, devoted himself heart and soul to the administrative work in the State. To every branch of administration he had to give new set up and sound foundation for changing completely the old tone of mismanagement, economic loss and efforts of the bureaucrats to keep up their vested interests preserved. What Shahu expected of the personnel in Kolhapur administration and what exactly he wished to do for the welfare of his State can in brief be understood from the substance of the circular, published in the State Gazette on the 14th April 1894. <sup>b</sup>that "After receiving orders, of the State or ordinary visit, the Officers concerned ask their subordinates to make arrangements of their superiors, and the subordinates harass the poor villagers charging the cost of such a tour through collecting forcibly articles of necessity without any payment. Henceforth they should stop this practice and pay on the spot what they purchase for."<sup>9</sup>

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8. Latthe, A.B., - Op.cit., vol.I, P.97

9. KSG., - Vol.I, dated 14th April 1894.

Certainly in a simple matter like this if it becomes a concern of a King, subjects breath freely about their hopes of a good rule of a ruler. And this circular might not have come up without making shahu aware of such practices in his State.

A ruler of a Princely State in India, during the days of Shahu was not meant to work strenuously. There was no fear to them also if they would please or keep the British power satisfied. Rulers like Sayajirao Gaikwad, who stuck to the ideal of the welfare State and expressed the ideas of social revolution, practically carried no administration in their states. But Shahu seemed to be aware of his heritage that Shivaji the Great bestowed upon his house. While giving then the account of his royal career of the first two months, to a friend he described -

" I am glad to say that I am going on well with my office work. There are many cases of the Council's time waiting for final disposal, say about 600 of which 250 are special appeals. I dispose about 6 every day in addition to the current work, and at this rate I think I shall clear up all arrears in a few months".<sup>10</sup>

#### TOURS TO KNOW GRIEVANCES

To Shahu, State tours were the devices "in seeing things personally, and speaking to the rayats about their wants".<sup>11</sup> And

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10. KAO., - SDR. No.3 for 1894 (Nos.301-422) No.334.

11. RGA., for 1894-95, P.2.



from the first of these tours in the Shirol Taluka in September 1894 to the last day of his career, he had used this device to have correct knowledge of the problems of his subjects. The account of the second tour in the month of March and April of 1895 helps us to know the mind of Shahu when we read -

" His Highness inspected the different Petas and visited some of the principal villages in each. The tour commenced with the inspection of the Gadhinglaj Peta wherein are situated some of the places notorious for the depredations and other atrocities of the Berad gang. His Highness talked, as is his wont, to the prisoners under trial who were confined in the Peta Kacheri cells. Most of them, of course, pleaded innocence. One of them, however, complained that he had been under trial for months and only wished for speedy justice. His Highness took note of it and after due inquiry of the matter, a circular was issued calling upon all Magistrates to furnish monthly returns of prisoners, remaining under trial for more than a month, with a statement of reasons for the same.<sup>12</sup>

Next to Gadhinglaj in the same programme, he proceeded to Gargoti where on the spot he considered favourably the demand of the people for opening a Girls' school. The question of drinking water of the Gargoti people was also solved after making necessary ~~quer~~ries involved in the matter. At Shenggaon he gave encouragement to village industry, the manufacturing of the catechu purely a forest product.

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12. Latthe, A.B., Op.cit. vol.I, P.98.

More accounts of some of his tours as mentioned below add to our knowledge of the keen interest Shahu had about the welfare of his subjects. Moreover, it is to be again remembered that those were the days of the disastrous famine of 1897. On the 20th November 1896 he visited Gadhinglaj and "passing through Raibag and Katkol"<sup>13</sup> saw the most detached positions of the territory as also the most severely suffering from the failure of the later rains terminated on the 30th idem. On account of the scarcity prevailing at the time, His Highness made long marches and short stays and travelled with the smallest possible retinue, riding camels and horses the whole way in order to be able to see the State of the crops beyond the road side".<sup>14</sup> From the April to the end of May 1897, after visiting Katkol, he toured the Bhudargad and Panhala Petas, the most suffered next to Katkol, in the famine on account of their hilly nature and poor soil. He was in these regions accompanied in his tours by the district and forest officers and the Executive Engineer to facilitate the relief works. And the construction of houses for the poor were considered projects of relief work on the spot. What Shahu actually felt of his tours can be seen from the letter he wrote to a friend -

" I have been visiting some of the remote parts of Sahyadri range and Wakee is one of them. People living in the jungles have a number of complaints and are not yet reconciled

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13. Ibid., P. 100

14. KAO., SDR. No.5 (Nos.828 to 984) No.388, 15th April,1896.

to the Forest Laws. I am trying to find out for myself if they have anything reasonable to argue and to see what can be done for them. It seems, personal visits to their houses in the heart of the jungles will go a great way towards lessening the friction between them and the officers. Another thing that strikes me is the extreme indebtedness of the Rayats. All their lands are in the hands of the Sawakars and I am considering what should be done to them."<sup>15</sup>

From the reading of this letter we know that from the very beginning of his rule Shahu was very much worried for the poverty stricken subjects. The attention he gave to the problems of hilly region people reveals his utmost desire to seek welfare of the people in the remotest part of his kingdom. In the history of Indian Princes we do not come across of such a king like Shahu, taking pains to go in the remote part of his State and see the hardships of his subjects by a close watch of their habits and houses. His understanding again of the geographical status of the land, so also the consequences of the geographical history on man, made him without taking notes from his officials, aware of the difficulties of the people living in the forests. One of the letters that he wrote to Bombay Governor certainly add to grasp his capabilities as a benevolent ruler and a servant of humanity, when we read -

"In my last tour in the districts, I visited the Gadhinglaj and Bhudargad Pethas. The people in the former are fairly off, but

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15. Ibid.

not in the latter which being situated near the Sahyadri range is not very fertile. People have, therefore, their grievances and the Rayats are deep in debts. I have been thinking, how to remedy these evils. The least connection to the Forest Tribes makes them bold and they recklessly cut down the jungles for Kumri, so one has to be cautious even in giving them a helping hand. The poor conditions of the Rayats is also a naughty question. I should very much like to see the actual cultivators hold lands in their name, but they are fast sinking to the level of mere hired labourers. I thought there was a want specially in the districts near Sahyadri; so a Girls' School and a school for Mohamedans have been ordered to be opened. For a very long time, the question of the lepers in the Narsoba Wadi has been before me. It is a place of Pilgrimage and men from distant parts always visit it. I wish to segregate the lepers, but it is a very difficult question and I should like to talk personally to Your Excellency in the matter. My views about the subject are that a pharmacy be established for them and the sexes should be separated. At first I intend admitting genuine Kolhapur subjects and asking the feudatories to pay for the maintenance of lepers from their districts."<sup>16</sup>

And it was fortune of the lepers in Kolhapur that on 22nd June 1897, the foundation of their Asylum was laid by him only.

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16. KAO., SDR, No.5. Duḡaka No.1, 1896 Nos.906-907.

While writing to his teacher S.M.Fraser, Shahu had informed in early 1895 of his daily time table (as) -

"Since my installation, I have made it a rule to see all those wish to wait upon me by appointment between 11 and 12 on all office days. But when men come without appointment, I do not give them access. They say this is European fashion and I do not like it. After 4-30 p.m. I see the Rayats when I go to the stables and they get an opportunity of talking freely with me".<sup>17</sup>

However, as Latthe had told, Shahu Chhatrapati who was by nature and training a thoroughly oriental ruler, soon returned to ways of life more congenial to himself and his people. In spite of this fact, he saw at fifty times more ordinary men, than any other member of his rank. In all these meetings with the commoners he used to discuss with them on almost all sorts of subjects relating to their day to day life. This had facilitated him to do away with the difficulties of his subjects.

#### ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS

What Shahu earnestly desired from the start of his royal career, can well be understood from the accounts of his tours mentioned above. | As an ideal of Chhatrapati Shivaji, he was more \*  
worried of the welfare of the majority people in his state. | His

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17. KAO, SDR. No.4 Letter to S.M.Fraser 1895. No.438.

State tour prior to the assumption of power made him aware of the hardships, the masses bore. Their superstitious way of life and timidity to have access to administrative power for getting their difficulties solved, allowed the officials to treat them in the manner they (officials) liked. Before holding reins of power in his hands he, therefore, suggested to issue on 15th March, 1894, a circular stating that "on the occasion of his personal visit or the visits of the officers, pre-planned arrangements must be made and no person in such a village or place should suffer and all the articles required for the visit of party must be purchased by payment on the spot".<sup>18</sup>

Generally it was held that the administration of the Princely States in India was the model of an anarchical form of Government. Affairs in Kolhapur were not exception till the British appointed Major Graham in 1851. But after Graham's retirement and introduction of the Agency and the Regency Administration,<sup>19</sup> except the period of Abasaheb Ghatge, there prevailed simply the influence of the British and Brahmins. The want of supreme authority made them <sup>to</sup> behave like the masters and no proper procedure in administrative routine was also followed. Shahu was to create as a very first task a machinery which would execute his decisions and wishes in a proper way.

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18. Marathe, K.D., Kolhapur Vatahukum PP.303 to 305.

19. Agency Government was introduced in 1866 and worked upto 1882. The Regency Government under Abasaheb Ghatge was formed from 16-3-1882 to his death, then the Council of Administration introduced in 1886, worked upto Shahu's beginning.

After the abolition of the Council of Administration, the whole State machinery was divided into three sections or departments, namely, the General, Civil and Justice. Huzur office or the office of the Maharaja with Huzur Chitnis was created on the 14th of April 1894. R.V.Sabnis a member of the non-Brahmin Kayastha Caste and Shahu's ex-teacher was appointed as the Huzur Chitnis. After Sabnis's promotion to Diwanship in 1898, Kirtikar, a Brahmin occupied the post of Huzur Chitnisship. Appointment of Sabnis and Kirtikar to the post of Huzur Chitnis carried much importance for the post was to deal with the confidential work of the State as well as of the Maharaja himself. The first important proclamation that was made by the Huzur Chitnis, on behalf of Shahu Chhatrapati was of 20th April 1894, which was published on the following day in the Kolhapur Gazette. And it was ordered in that proclamation to make correspondence to the heads of the concerned Departments<sup>20</sup> directly mentioning their designations as Diwan, Sarsubhedar and Sar Nayadhish, although the members of the Council of Administration were continued as advisers.

Unless bureaucracy works systematically and smoothly, no ruler of any high degree or calibre functions as he and the people wish. In Kolhapur State, to ruler like Shahu who was in touch with western knowledge had to look at all kinds of administrative

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20. Marathe, K.D., - Cp.cit. P.60.

matters like the recruitment<sup>s</sup> of staff, their qualifications, positions, capacities, service rules etc. Similarly it was also his duty to direct and guide them properly if they fail to understand their duties or even deliberately tried to mislead the administration. The very first question which was raised before him, was the authority of granting privilege leave to the State servants. Under the Council of Administration, the members of the Council were the heads of different departments. The new <sup>11x?</sup> change therefore, perplexed the situation. Decision in this matter required overall thought of the future consequences of any administrative decision. And State is not a machinery in which frequent changes can be tolerated. To cope in right earnest, <sup>x</sup> Shahu, declared in the Gazette of 5th May 1894, that the privilege leave to the Government servants under the monthly pay of Rs.100/- should be granted by the heads of the departments under whom such servants worked.<sup>21</sup>

This had facilitated the procedure of granting leaves<sup>s</sup>, so also, the servants were made to know the proper authority of granting leaves<sup>s</sup>.

Shahu had from the beginning, taken<sup>x</sup> efforts to introduce reforms in his administration for seeking social justice and making it as a machinery of modern <sup>x!</sup> tone in a welfare state. His administrative reforms can be put under the following heads -

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21. KSG., dated 5th May 1894 P. 82.



- a) To maintain the dignity of Chhatrapatiship
- b) Sincerity and efficiency in work
- c) Warning to remain present by the State servants etc.
- d) Devices to speed up the work
- e) Beneficial decisions, etc.
- f) Office timings and calling of explanations
- g) Reduction in expenditure
- h) Pensions etc.
- i) Village Administration
- j) Kulkarni Examination
- k) Indianisation of Administration etc.

However, instead of going into the details of all these heads, it is explained in the following pages as to how these reforms were brought upto, seek public benefit.

At the beginning of Shahu's career, the administration in Kolhapur seemed to be<sup>x</sup> deteriorated as there was no definite procedure even for applying to the supreme authority of the State, the Chhatrapati. State policies cannot be turned into benevolent one, unless rulers of it wish the good of the subjects. Similarly, administration in a State cannot be made worthy unless it is made to behave like that. In Kolhapur, there were number of problems. Shahu Maharaja had tried, therefore, to change the entire administrative set<sup>u</sup>p right from the mode of applying to the Chhatrapati to pensions of the retired servants and duties of the village servants. On the 7th June, 1895, a circular was issued for the knowledge of the public as to how they should submit their applications to the Chhatrapati. Out of the total 17 points in that circular, the first one asked "to all the concerned to submit their applications in the name of the Chhatrapati. The language

should be Marathi and application specific and not loose....  
Instead of many demands in one application, one demand should be in one application".<sup>22</sup>

The title "Huzur" was specially used to call the Chhatrapati, but all the heads of various departments had made the people <sup>x</sup>to call them by that title. Instead of doing their duties, the officers, thus were indulging into unnecessary matters. It was, again, to lessen indirectly the prestige of the Chhatrapati. To maintain, hence, the dignity of that title and to make <sup>x</sup>aware of their positions and duties, the officers were asked to behave properly.<sup>23</sup>

A phase comes frequently after a change in the master or Government, that the servants do not work sincerely till they form their own opinion about the new change. To persons in the service of Kolhapur, Shahu's rule, in regard to this dictum, was not <sup>x</sup> favourable. Against the will of the influential Brahmins in the State Service, appointment of R.V.Sabnis was made. And the inclination of Shahu to solve the problems of the poor peasants and rayats awfully disturbed the bureaucrats for their <sup>x</sup>future. Naturally it was found, offices working lethargic. As a remedial action, Shahu had to adopt different measures to make the bureaucrats work properly. Then rules regarding the maintenance of worksheet of

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22. Marathe, K.D., - Op.cit. P.75

23. Ibid, PP.107-108. See also KSG - dated 6th March, 1899 PP.57-58.

clerks,<sup>24</sup> and officers,<sup>25</sup> of promotions,<sup>26</sup> leaves,<sup>27</sup> insincerity<sup>11x9</sup> in work,<sup>28</sup> upgradation of positions,<sup>29</sup> etc. ■ were clearly laid down for the first time. There was a bad habit of accepting donations from native Governments or States, Knights, Jahagirdars, Inamdars, foreigners and others. Officials, once accustomed to this habit never feel wrong on giving any information of his State to others or doing any work for them at the cost of State purse to x(( which he belongs. To root out this habit and to maintain dignity of his State and officials, a notification<sup>30</sup> was issued by the Maharaja, on 28th January, 1903.

In any age, the office timings of officers bear much importance. If they do not attend their offices in time or remain frequently out of offices, cause a great loss to the State and make suffer the subjects who are in need of their duties and guidance. Shahu had, therefore, made strict rules regarding such matters and asked his officers to maintain their separate records.<sup>31</sup> To check, then, the mischief mongers among the servants, special attention was paid. Sometimes, oral orders were given by the Chhatrapati to carry out or execute certain decisions. On such occasions some officials took disadvantage. It was, hence, ordered

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24. Sarsubhe Vat. No.34, About to take work of 25 folioes per day from clerks, dated 6th January 1911.

25. Marathe, K.D., - Op.cit. P.268.

26. Huzur Vat., No.697, About Promotions, dated 12th Feb., 1907.

27. Marathe, K.D., - Op.cit., PP.211-212.

28. Ibid, P. 65.

29. Ibid, P. 69.

30. Ibid, PP. 311-312.

31. Ibid; pp. 128-129.

that, "In the matter of loss or profit to the State or in the judicial matters, wherever there is a need of written orders from the Chhatrapati, no order be implemented without written order from the Huzur office".<sup>32</sup>

#### BENEFICIAL DECISIONS IN ADMINISTRATION

To speed up the work in the administration is to give justice at the earliest. Now-a-days, a "Red Slip" is used for <sup>1128</sup> such purposes. But Shahu adopted a different device. In 1921 it was ordered that the replies must be given within 72 hours or three days after receipt of a letter. Because of this order, on the admission of any work or a letter, the time and date of admission was regularly mentioned. The cases which demanded explanations were to be despatched within seven days to its concerned owners or authorities. And if a mistake was found in the procedure or in application, the concerned servant was asked to report the matter immediately to his head.<sup>33</sup>

Shahu was very keen about the implementation of his orders passed regarding the welfare of his State. But as it is today, bureaucrats were too cold in timely implementing his orders. And Shahu was very much eager to see immediate effects of his orders or decisions. To facilitate the work of execution, he managed to attach a special note in a printed form to the papers of decisions

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32. Marathe, K.D., - Op.cit., PP.97-98.

33. KSG., April 7, 1921, P. 65.

to avoid further reminders. To see then, the implementation of orders, a special officer known as "Inspector of Orders" was appointed. After receiving an order from the Huzur Office, within six days period, the concerned officer was to report about such receipts of orders to the Inspector of Orders. A failure to report in that regard, was liable to pay, a fine of one rupee per day. And the Inspector of Orders was also after receiving information from the lower offices, was to submit his report to Huzur Chitnis within three days, failing which he too, was fined for one rupee per day for delay.<sup>34</sup>

#### REDUCTION IN THE EXPENDITURE

In a district size State of Kolhapur there was natural check on its economic resources. Agriculture was the main industry and land revenue the main source for State Budget. In such a state of affairs, a wise ruler like him, could not screw out money from his subjects for his own fancy or the extravagant expenditure of his officers. The plague of 1898-99, also caused a heavy loss, and expenditure on the State treasury. Then through the findings of a committee appointed in 1900, efforts were made by him to reduce the expenditure on State Administration.<sup>35</sup> Secondly, heads of departments and high officials used to go frequently on State tours to visit interior parts, and Jahagirs under Kolhapur State. There was no limit as to how many days one should be on tour and there was no end to earn money by way of allowances and other means. Strict

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34. Bhosale, S.S. (Edr), - Rajarshi Shahu, KVK., PP.336-337.

35. KSG., - July 28, 1900, P.202.

rules were, therefore, framed to control the tours and reduce the expenditure.<sup>36</sup> Then various new reforms were introduced regarding the procedure of pension<sup>37</sup> of servants, calling of explanations<sup>38</sup> etc.

#### VILLAGE ADMINISTRATION

Village Administration in the past, was the key to the State administration. Unless subjects in villages remain happy no Government would <sup>be</sup> called a welfare State. To Shahu, Village administration was more important for two reasons : 1) the people to what caste <sup>x</sup> be belonged were mostly in the villages and tillers of the soil, and 2) the major portion of the State income was <sup>x</sup> fetched from the land revenue collected from the villages. Naturally he did everything possible <sup>8</sup> (for him) to make village administration suitable and acceptable to citizens in villages. Similarly, he managed to link up the village administrative set up with the Central Administration in the State. Besides as the days were changing, new schemes were introduced <sup>8</sup> (by him) to suit the situation.

Basically Village Administration in Kolhapur, was a great problem on account of the fact that as there was no direct ruler in the <sup>9</sup> last fifty years from the House of the Chhatrapatis. No necessary records were also maintained by the village officials. Unless it was rightly set up, no beneficial work was possible at

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36. KSG., - 6th April 1901, PP.48-49.

37. Marathe, K.D., - Op.cit., P.338.

38. Ibid, - P.128.

the village level. As early as 1897, the Maharaja had turned his attention to village administration and first ordered to maintain all the necessary records, including, the inward and outward Registers, regularly.<sup>39</sup>

Patils and Kulkarnis were the heads of Village Administration. Mostly, all Patils were illiterate and Kulkarnis well educated and clever enough to carry on their jobs. But because of caste system and as all the Kulkarni<sup>\*</sup> belonged to the Brahmin caste, Kulkarnis dominated the village affairs and Patils were (just as) puppets. Without changing this situation, a move to social change was not possible. To change Kulkarni system meant that time to draw wrath of the Brahmins. All Kulkarnis were hereditary and the system was rooted deep in the past. As a first step towards the change in the Kulkarni system, compulsory Kulkarni Examination<sup>40</sup> was introduced in 1898 for all the Brahmins who wanted to enter into that profession. Due to this, even though, it was only for the Brahmins, compulsion for appearing that examination diverted the mind of Brahmins on many grounds, such as inability, better prospects in other fields, competition etc. This had helped to make the Brahmins seek new professions and welcome new trends in administration and life.

After practising<sup>\*</sup> the Kulkarni system that was brought into effect in 1898, in 1913, for the first time in the History of Kolhapur, the Marathas were permitted to become Kulkarnis and work

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39. Sarsubhe Vat., No.34, About Village Administration dated 20th Dece., 1897.

40. Huzur Resolution, No.150, About Kulkarni Examination, 26th August, 1898.

on a par with the Brahmin Kulkarnis. And one Bhau Ramchandra Mane<sup>41</sup> of Kololi (Kodoli), who passed the Kulkarni Examination, was appointed along with the permission to all the qualified Marathas,<sup>42</sup> as the first Maratha Kulkarni. Thus experiments were made by Shahu Maharaja to change the old society and seek social change as well as social justice.

#### INDIANISATION OF ADMINISTRATION

The very important reforms in regard to social change which Shahu introduced in his administration can be named as "Indianization of Administration". As has been explained in the Chapter - "Dealing with the Bureaucrats and Brahmins" it was the policy of the Maharaja to give no extensions in the services to the Europeans and fill up those posts by appointing natives. Because of this policy only, Candy, the Principal of Rajaram College was transferred back to British Government even at the heavy cost. In place of the Europeans and, in newly created posts, throughout his life no European was appointed by him. Political Agents and Residents, so also the Chief of Police and the Head of the Red Risala - his body guard were directly appointed by the British and his power was limited to prevent such appointments. On his own, however, even<sup>an</sup> exception, was not there.

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41. Huzur Office, No.131, About permission to Marathas for appearing to Kulkarni Examination and appointment of B.R.Mane as Kulkarni dated 2nd August, 1913.

42. KSG., - Huzur Resolution No.593, dated February 1, 1915.



Marathi, in those days, was used as the State language. But it was dominated by the English words and figures. In 1897, to avoid the dominance of English, he ordered to keep muster rolls of the State servants, the appointments of Patil and Kulka-<sup>9</sup>rni and the Registers in accordance with the Phasali year.<sup>43</sup>

Kolhapur State comprised, Marathi as well as Kanadi speaking area. In <sup>the</sup> judicial matters, sometimes, an interpreter was required either to translate from Kanadi or Marathi. And as there was British dominance, an English speaking man who knew these two languages was to be an interpreter. This practice was stopped by him and from 1896<sup>44</sup> Marathi men, who knew Kanadi were appointed to work as interpreters. Thus a sincere attempt was made by him to indianise the whole set up towards the social change in India.<sup>18</sup>

(Other than all these administrative reforms, efforts were also made by him primarily to change the old society and seek welfare of the people on the modern lines.

#### KOLHAPUR ADMINISTRATION

During the period of the British Power in India, the native States had totally stopped war campaigns and conquests of each other. For, guarantee and protection were granted to them through the Queen's Proclamation of 1858. The<sup>iv</sup> duty, therefore, (they had before them) was to deal with their kingly responsibilities

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43. Sarsubhe Vat. No.32, About asking to follow Phasali Year, dated 24th August, 1912.

44. Marathe, K.D., - Cp.cit., Pp.75 to 77.

in their respective states. The questions of pacification and consolidation of their powers either in their own States or conquered regions were unseen. All that, they were made to live as desired by the British. The Military Department in a native State had possibly a nominal charge of protecting its head and maintaining the law and order if needed. However, the civil administration in each of the Princely State was the direct concern of the native rulers. The total area occupied by the princely states was not much less than a half of that of British India and the number of separate states within this area was nearly eight hundred.<sup>45</sup>

The limitations of the Indian Princes were aptly described by Sir William Hunter when he wrote -

" The English Government has respected the possessions of the Native Chiefs and more than one-third of the country still remains in the hands of the hereditary Rulers - That Government (British), as Suzerain in India, does not allow its feudatories to make war upon each other, or to have any relations with foreign States. If interferes when any Chief misgoverns his people; rebukes and if needful removes the oppressor; protects the weak and firmly imposes peace upon all".<sup>46</sup> Lord Minto, the then Viceroy of India in a speech at Udaipur in 1909 clearly again explained the British policy as -

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45. Warner, W. Lee, - 'The Citizen of India', P 63  
Macmillan & Co. Ltd., London, 1897.
46. Hunter, Sir William, - 'Indian Empire', P 76, London 1892.
47. 'India Year Book of 1922', PP. 115-116.

" Our policy is with rare exceptions, one of non-interference in the internal affairs of the Native States. But in guaranteeing their internal independence, and in undertaking their protection against external aggression, it naturally follows that the Imperial Government has assumed a certain degree of responsibility for the general soundness of their administration and could not consent to incur the reproach of being an indirect instrument of misrule. There are also certain matters in which it is necessary for the Government of India to safeguard the interests of the community as a whole as well as those of the paramount power, such as railways, telegraphs and other services of imperial character. But the relation of the Supreme Government to the State is one of suzerainty. The foundation stone of the whole system is the recognition of the identity of the interest between the Imperial Government and Durbars, and the minimum interference with the latter in their own affairs.<sup>47</sup>

It was therefore a naked truth that the Viceroy had full legal right to remove any Indian Prince from his throne if he deemed it necessary. And those were the days of a tense atmosphere caused by the rift between Shahu Maharaja and the Brahmin orthodoxy.

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47. India Year Book of 1922, PP 115-116.

PRE-SHAHU PROGRESS OF KOLHAPUR

In the pre-Shahu period, specially from Major Graham's career in 1854, and under Abasaheb Ghatage, notable events had taken place to change the old Kolhapur. The most important among them can be mentioned as below -

- 1) A High School and Training School<sup>48</sup> for the primary teachers were opened respectively in 1867 and 1870 and an independent Educational Inspector was appointed from 1867 to look after the educational progress of Kolhapur.
- 2) In place of the old Kolhapur coins known as Panhali coins the coins of the British Government were compulsorily brought into practice.
- 3) To facilitate the Land Revenue and Administration of land the new system of land - survey was applied and maintenance of land Records was made necessary. In 1872, the first census of Kolhapur was made and thereafter for every 10 years the practice was continued.
- 4) In the Kolhapur State proper, two divisions were made and to each division one District Officer was appointed.
- 5) Police Department was cut off from the military and with a Chief Police Officer it was made an independent Department. Similarly to every Peta, one Police Inspector was appointed.

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48. Shirke, D.M., - Kolhapurcha Rajyakarbhar, P. 35.

- 6) A Forest Department with a Forest Officer as its head was created.
- 7) The Department of Public Works was created with an executive engineer as an head of it.
- 8) Rajaram College was established.
- 9) For the progress of women<sup>x</sup> education, the Ahilyabai Girls School was opened.
- 10) The State Railway from Kolhapur to Miraj was constructed.
- 11) Road<sup>x</sup> to connect important places were built up along with some bridges on rivers.
- 12) For the supply of drinking water and irrigation purpose, Rankala and Kalamba tanks were constructed, and
- 13) For the welfare of the public, some buildings were constructed and the Department of Health Services was brought into effect to look after the public needs.<sup>49</sup>

#### AFTER ADOPTION

After the adoption ceremony held on the 17th March 1884, Yashwantrao, the eldest son of Abasaheb Ghatage, became Shahu the Chhatrapati - the IX King of Kolhapur. But owing to his minority age, instead of the State duties, he began his studies<sup>50</sup> and the State administration was continued as before under the control of the Regency Council.

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49. Ibid.

50. RGAK., for 1883-84, P. 13.

Shahu, of course, used to remain present for State functions and ceremonies of importance. And as the non Brahmins, generally begin any work by offering Dakshina or donations to the Brahmins, Shahu's real career as the Chhatrapati, began with his handsome act of donations of Rs.10,000/- and 5,000/- in 1884 to the Brahmin institutions like the Fergusson College and the Poona Girls School in Poona,<sup>51</sup> conducted by the Deccan Education Society.<sup>52</sup> Moreover to enhance the progress of education, as the part of his royal duty Shahu became the first patron and president of the Deccan Education Society. His father Shri-mant Jayasingrao Ghatage, the Sr.Chief of Kagal and the Regent of Kolhapur accepted the Vice-Presidency.<sup>53</sup> However, the first public function that Shahu attended as the Chhatrapati of Kolhapur, was the ceremony of turning the first sod of the Kolhapur State Railway, on the 3rd May, 1888, at Kolhapur. There in his maiden speech, the young prince told to his people that "The success of this Railway should have a beneficial influence in developing the resources of my State."<sup>54</sup>

#### ASSUMPTION OF POWER

On April 2, 1894, in the grand Investiture Darbar, Shahu assumed the full powers of his State and by the proclamation,

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51. Ibid., for 1884-85, P.13.

52. Except the non-Brahmin Princes no non-Brahmin individual was the member of the Deccan Education Society and in those days except the men of other religions like Christians, no non-Brahmin student was admitted in that institution.  
- Limaye, P.M., The History of the Deccan Edn. Society. P.3

53. Limaye, P.M., Ibid, P.58.

54. BCB., Op.cit., P. I.

declared to his subjects in Marathi, the language of the people that - "Be it known to all our subjects of the Kolhapur State that the function of the Council of Administration which conducted the affairs of the State during our minority have terminated and we acceded to the full powers of our state from today i.e.

// 2nd April, 1894." Further the proclamation went on. - " It is our earnest desire that our subjects should always be happy and contented, that their welfare should increase from the day to day and that our state should go on prospering in all its respect<sup>x</sup>. In promoting the <sup>x</sup> welfare of the subjects, we rely on the most loyal and hearty co-operation of our Jahagirdars, Relatives, Sardars, Mankaris, Inamdars, Kamdars, Mercantile classes of all ranks and all other subjects. We invoke with undivided attention the blessings of the Ruler of the Universe and Highest spirit on our career commenced this day that it may last long and prove beneficial."<sup>55</sup>

#### ADMINISTRATION UNDER SHAHU

The total period <sup>x</sup>that Shahu ruled the Kolhapur State was from the 2nd April 1894 to the 5th May 1922 as he died in the morning of 6th May of 1922. Totally it comes to twenty eight years and a little more than a month.

As the Chhatrapati of Kolhapur Shahu Maharaja's first concern was the administration of the Kolhapur State proper and

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55. KSG., Extraordinary, Saturday, 4th April 1894, P.I.

then to his supervisory power to see the smooth administration of the Feudatory States and Jahagirdars under him. The principal Feudatory States in the Kolhapur principality were the following (five):<sup>56</sup> 1) Vishalgad, 2) Bavada, 3) Kapshi, 4) Kagal and 5) Ichalkaranji.

The three of these, namely, Vishalgad, Bavada and Ichalkaranji were managed by their respective chiefs and the remaining two, Kapshi and Kagal because of minority age of their Chiefs, by the Kolhapur Darbar. The heads of the first three feudatory states, Abaji Krishnaji Pant Pratinidhi, the chief of Vishalgad, Mahav<sup>de</sup>rao Moreshwar Pant, the chief of Bavada and Narayanrao Govind Ghorpade, the Chief of Ichalkaranji were the Brahmins and the chief of Kapshi, Jaysingrao Ghorpade Senapati and chief of Kagal, the Ghatage, were the Marathas. The administration of the feudatory States was managed respectively by their Jahagirdars. The Brahmin feudatories in Kolhapur could not take interest in the revolutionary and progressive social policies of Shahu Maharaja. The Maratha Jahagirdars in Kagal and Kapshi followed some of the schemes of Shahu and worked for the development of new life and progress.<sup>57</sup>

#### THE KOLHAPUR STATE PROPER

The Administration of the Kolhapur State proper was

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56. RGAK, for 1894-95, P.5.

57. Shrimant Bapusaheb Maharaj, the Chief of Kagal Senior, was the younger brother of Shahu Maharaja and had spread up all the social views and policies of the Maharaja.



directly the matter of Shahu's concern and career. With his coming to power, the old system of the Council of Administration had gone and members of that Council became the departmental heads under the monarchical form of Administration. Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaja was the supreme head of the Kolhapur State and there was no meddling either of the Political Agent, Resident or the Prime Minister of the Council Administration. So far internal and civil administration was concerned he had the power to make and unmake laws but with a precaution that it may not ~~be~~ become according to the British "an indirect instrument of misrule".<sup>58</sup> The limitations and restrictions as well as the scope and benefit of power in a princely state were to depend upon the prudence that a native prince was to avail.

The heads of the different departments dealt with all matters relating to their respective work and took the orders from His Highness, for opinion to the Council consisting of the Diwan, the Chief Judge and the Chief Revenue Officer. Of course, this Council was now merely an advisory body and orders of the Maharaja were to go unchallenged. Except the powers of the Chhatrapati, the Administration of the Kolhapur State was set up on the pattern of the British system.<sup>59</sup>

The Chhatrapati was the head of the State, and under him

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58. India Year Book of 1922, P. 116

59. Deshpande, - Karvir Rajyacha Itihas, P.54.

was his Diwan the Prime Minister. The two other important personnels, the Sarnyayadhisha - the Chief Judge and the Sar Subhe, the Chief Revenue officer formed the Chhatrapati's Council. All the three members were allotted (to) departmental duties as the heads of their respective departments and had to attend the work regularly.

The position of the Diwan was next to the Chhatrapati, and he looked after and supervised the whole administration of the State. Naturally his was the post of first rank honour and dignity in the Darbar and in the public. But his public image was just as a civil servant and not like that of Peshwaship. Similarly his post was not hereditary and he headed the General Department. Next to Diwan, the posts of the Chief Judge and the Chief Revenue Officer followed. The Chief Judge looked after the Department of Justice and the Revenue Officer carried out the work like the present collector. The services of these three officers were terminable at any time.

For the administrative purpose, the Kolhapur principality was divided into two zones as the Northern and Southern zone, each of which was placed under a District Officer. This district officer was to exercise in his division, the powers of the 1st Class Magistrate in criminal matters and some of the powers of a Collector in the revenue matters. At the close of the year 1894-95, a change was made in the distribution of the work of these two officers and one of them was entrusted with the revenue powers of Collector, and the other

with the criminal powers of the 1st Class Magistrate in the whole principality. This change had enabled the District Officer in charge of revenue work to maintain uniformity in the mode of keeping accounts and other revenue matters and to devote his undivided attention to revenue work. On the other hand, the Magist<sup>r</sup>ial work could also be performed satisfactorily and the provision for appointing a competent law graduate to that post <sup>60</sup> secured greater efficiency and despatch.

The principality, for administrative convenience was again divided into petas or talukas and in the time of Shahu it consisted of 1) Karvir, 2) Panhala 3) Alta 4) Shirol 5) Bhudargad 6) Gadhinglaj and Mahals - the administrative blocks, smaller than the talukas were 7) Raibag 8) Katkol 9) Chanwad and 10) ■ Radhanagari. <sup>61</sup>

To facilitate, the actual administration, the state business was divided into nine main departments and at the Central Secretariat of the Kolhapur State, the following departments with the title of their heads were working under their respective heads as -

- 1) General Department - Diwan
- 2) Judicial Department - Chief Judge or Sarnyayadhish
- 3) Revenue Department - Chief Revenue Officer or Sarsubhe
- 4) Medical Department - Darbar Surgeon

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60. RGAK, For 1895-96, Ch.II, P.11.

61. RGAK, For 1893-94, P. 5.

- 5) Public Works Department - Executive Engineer.
- 6) Education Department - Educational Inspector.
- 7) Abakari Excise Department - Excise Commissioner.
- 8) Control of Prices - Controller of prices.
- 9) Military and Red Risala - His Highness Body Guard -  
Risaldar Major.

The actual working although was under the nine departments, the annual reports of the Kolhapur State, however has shown seven heads only as - 1) Administration of Land 2) Protection 3) Production and Distribution 4) Financial Review 5) Medical Relief 6) Instruction and the 7) Miscellaneous. <sup>62</sup>

To know exact details and developments in <sup>the</sup> Kolhapur under Shahu Chhatrapati, it is essential to see the progress that the State had achieved through the working of the various departments. While paying attention to that process we find that the seven heads, given in the Report of the Administration of Kolhapur for every year, were also divided into subheads and special care was taken to maintain administrative purity and efficiency. The following information as mentioned under the seven heads and their respective subheads will certainly help in short, to know the procedure and function of the State.

#### 1 ADMINISTRATION OF LAND

Under the title of "Administration of Land" there were nine subheads and each of it was to see through its working the interest of the whole State. All these subheads were named as :

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62. Ibid, For 1894-95, P. Index.

- 1) Survey and Settlement
- 2) Boundary Disputes
- 3) Tagai Advances
- 4) Inam Grants
- 5) Waste lands
- 6) Wards
- 7) Funds held in trust by the Darbar
- 8) Sheri lands
- 9) Realisation of Revenue.<sup>63</sup>

Out of these subheads, the first two were very important as they were directly concerned with the State's prosperity and peace. Others were of regular nature of a state's attention and managed in accordance with precedent and convenience. However, the subhead of "Funds" was newly created and deserves a special attention. Hence the two sub-heads - the survey settlement, and "Funds held in trust by the Darbar," are dealt with as follows -

#### SURVEY AND SETTLEMENT

Among the new and utilitarian systems that the British introduced in India, was the land survey system. In the Kolhapur State the land survey and settlement system was practically adopted from the regime of Shahu Maharaja.<sup>64</sup> The very intention behind this process was to know the cultivable area and occupied areas in acres. Similarly the land survey and settlement system was also applied first to the Kolhapur city Municipality

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63. RGAR, For 1920-21, PP. 11-20.

64. Ibid., for 1894, P. 37.

and then to other municipalities in the State. Due to this, taxable lands were discovered and tax revenue was increased. This system in the regime of the Maharaja was extended to almost the whole (Kolhapur) principality including its feudatory states.<sup>65</sup>

#### FUNDS HELD IN TRUST BY THE DARBAR

It is wonderfully surprising that a new ~~scheme~~<sup>?</sup> under the directions of Shahu Maharaja was applied to accept voluntary contributions made by the members of the royal family as well as the public for educational and charity purposes. All these contributions were collected <sup>in</sup> the specific names and purposes and were mainly used in aid of the poor students of different castes studying schools and staying in Boardings. The first of these funds was the "Maratha Education Society Fund"<sup>66</sup> of 1902. The object of this fund was to afford educational facilities to students of the Maratha Community as that community had contributed towards this fund. Shahu Maharaja had himself also contributed to the fund and given buildings worth Rs.25,000/- and annual grants of Rs.2,000/-.

Certainly small State like Kolhapur which had meagre resources needed such a scheme to collect money to carry out its progressive educational policy and programme of peoples upliftment. The important 'Funds' thus appeared in the list of State were - the

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65. Ibid., for 1920-21, P.11.

66. Ibid., P.16.

Southern Maratha Jain Fund, The Mohammedan Fund, Poor Boy's Library Fund, the Kayasth Prabhu Boarding Fund, Prince Shivaji Free Maratha Boarding Fund, Rohidas Boarding Institute<sup>67</sup> etc. and all of them were established after 1902 and before 1920.

## 2 PROTECTION

Under Chapter 'Protection', in the Kolhapur Administrative Report we come across the fact that in the Kolhapur Maratha State, military was nominal and used only for ceremonial purposes. It was the tragedy not of Kolhapur alone but of all the Native States that the British strictly put restrictions on the number, size and activities of the armies in the Native States. The functions of the armies in the Native States were taken off by the British through the clause of guarantee and protection mentioned in the "Queen's Proclamation of 1858". There was no question, therefore, even of maintaining peace and order by the army in the native States. In fact ceremonial attendance in the State functions and guarding Chief of a State and the royal family members, so also the key personnel in the administration were the duties of a native military.

The Kolhapur State was only the existing State of the great Maratha power established by Shivaji the Great, but ironically enough it's military strength was very meagre. The military establishment of the State under Shahu, consisted of ~~two~~ two

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67. Ibid., Pp. 16 to 18.

divisions namely 1) The Kolhapur Infantry commanded by an European officer and 2) the Red Coated Risala or His Highness's Body Guard under command of a native officer.

The sanctioned strength of this force inclusive of officers and the rank and file remained the same i.e. 551 and the Red Risala had a strength of 156.<sup>68</sup> The infantry was idle since the British began to supervise Kolhapur. If at all it was made active the British were to use it against the Chief and people of Kolhapur. The total of the police force was 688 and was raised to about 1000 in 1921.<sup>69</sup> From this information, namely, of the Military and Police in the Kolhapur State one can easily understand why the King like Shahu - the advocate of liberation did not dare to use his military strength against the British for carrying out the struggle for India's freedom.

The department of Law, Justice and Administration of Municipalities were also mentioned under the head of Protection and were dealt with separately. Shahu Maharaj had taken very keen interest in this department and from the beginning of his rule, issued a number of ordinances and proclamations for the benefit of the masses and to safeguard the principles of justice and State laws. In the Criminal Justice section there was mismanagement before Shahu's coming to power. He immediately knowing all the things, issued an ordinance on the 28th April 1894

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68. RGAK., for 1894-95, P. 47.

69. Ibid., for 1921-22, Ch. II, P. 8.



that "It has been observed that the Magistrates while giving judgement to the convicts by imprisonment and fine do not mention in their report about the recovery of fine".<sup>70</sup> And he ordered to mention either the recovery or due of fine and strictly warned the judiciary to follow his orders.

For the prisoners in Kolhapur Jail a Night School was conducted inside the Central Jail with a Prisoner <sup>x</sup>for its teacher. School hours were from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. and studies consisted of reading, writing, and simple x arithmetics. Long term prisoners were taught various useful handicrafts such as weaving carpets, canework, masonry, carpentary etc.

The department of Criminal and Civil Justice in the Kolhapur State was based on the British India pattern. The Maharaja, no doubt, was <sup>8</sup>the supreme in all matters, his Court had appellate powers. The Sarnyayadhish or the Chief Judge of the State was to work independently. (Any appeal went to the Court of Maharaja against the decision of the Court of Sarnyayadhish, it was considered only on its merit and in accordance with the provisions of law. Shahu Maharaja always respected law and respected his judges and jurists. No clash or dispute, therefore, arose between him and the Sarnyayadhish or the other judges. It must be noted here that although the major years of Shahu's career were spent <sup>A</sup>for the non-Brahmin movements and the Poona Brahmins treated him as their enemy, throughout his royal

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70. Karvir State Gazette dated 24-4-1894, P. 78.

career the post of the Sarnyayadhish in the Kolhapur State was adorned mostly by the Brahmin Judges. When he came to the throne, Rao Bahadur B.N.Joshi was the Sarnyayadhish and in 1922, Gokhale<sup>71</sup> mourned his death.

The Civil Justice Department administered on high moral and jurisprudential principles. To carry out regular duties under civil justice, courts of permanent nature at the Capital, and head quarters of Taluka places were functioning without any interference of the Chhatrapati. No complaint or appeal had been filed to the British against the Maharaja by any Brahmins and others in the Kolhapur State, against the decision of any court in Kolhapur.

In regard to the Criminal Justice, in 1894-95, there were 39 courts.<sup>72</sup> But due to heavy work and as it was understood by the Maharaja that justice in delay is the injustice itself, the number of the criminal courts was increased to 60 in 1921-22.<sup>73</sup> Special attention was ever given during the period of Shahu Maharaja to those who were in the lowest rung of the society and who had fear to get justice from their superiors in the administration. In addition to that in furtherance of justice, so also in aid of justice-seekers, in the time of Shahu, the 15 LL.B.s, 14 District Pleaders, 21 State pleaders, 162 pleaders holding Sanads by special permission of Shahu Chhatrapati and many

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71. RGAK., for 1894-95 P.52 and for 1921-22, P. Appendix I.

72. Bhosale, S.S., Rajarshi Shahu, KVK, P. 359.

Mr.D.R.Bagade, has given the number as 38 which is wrong.

See, RGAK, for 1894-95, P.52.

73. Ibid. P. 360.

Mukhtyars practising in the lower courts of Magistrates, were granted Sanads.<sup>74</sup> And to enrich the knowledge of the pleaders, as well as of the judges, there was a good Law Library. But it was unable due to its poor finance to procure good and costly law books needed by lawyers in Kolhapur. When the matter was brought to the notice of the Maharaja, an arrangement was immediately made to help the lawyers and to enrich their Law Library.<sup>75</sup>

Brahmins and non-Brahmins, so also subjects of other religions in Kolhapur enjoyed full faith and sound trust in the working of the judiciary and its supreme head, the Maharaja Chhatrapati. There was no emergency against any low or high caste or religion, in the Kolhapur of Shahu Maharaja. Only one thing was seen strange, unwanted, unexpected and unavoidable by the traditionalist and that was the emergence of new classless, casteless egalitarian society.

#### MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATION

During the regime of Shahu Maharaja, the Municipal Administration in the Kolhapur State was strikingly changed and reformed particularly from 1905 to 1922. In 1894-95, Rao Saheb Ganesh Pandurang Thakar, the Daftardar and District Magistrate was the President of the Kolhapur Municipality. He was a Brahmin and most of the members of the Kolhapur Municipality as well other

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74. RGAK. for 1921-22, P.29.

75. Ibid.

municipalities in the Kolhapur State, were Brahmins. However, it was recorded in connection with the Kolhapur Municipality that even after having such a sensible and learned group of the Brahmin councilars, out of the total 56 meetings (of municipality) 16 were adjourned in 1894-95 due to lack of corum.<sup>76</sup> It has been stated by Shri J.P.Naik, a renowned educationalist in India, that from 1889 to 1904, the Kolhapur Municipality was ruled by mis-<sup>\*</sup>management, corruption and such other things. There was a complete hold over its administration of a dominant gang who cared little for the public welfare.<sup>77</sup>

The process of reconstructing Kolhapur city began actually with the beginning of Shahu's Rule in Kolhapur. The old city of Kolhapur had many natural tanks and each of it belonged to a caste among the Hindus. A tank, called Kapiltirth was at the centre of the old Kolhapur city and the work of demolishing it, for public good, was taken in hand. Knowing this stand through <sup>\*</sup>some sources, Veda Shastri Vasudev Shastri Abhyankar, the leader of the conservative Brahmins in Kolhapur planned to stop that work. He, therefore, in the typical way of the Brahminical form<sup>\*</sup> and taking for himself, as all the Brahmins did in those days, as the superhuman among the Hindus, wrote a letter to Shahu Maharaja on 16th January 1895, asking him for issuing an order to stop the demolishing work of Kapilatirth.<sup>78</sup> However, as the majority of

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76. RGAK., for 1894-95, P 71.

77. Naik, J.P.- Kolhapur Nagarpalikecha Itihas, 1854-1944, P.110, Kolhapur, 1944.

78. Ibid, P. 108

of the Brahmin members in the Municipality was convinced by the Maharaja, the tank was destroyed, against the will of the traditional Brahmins to grace the beauty of Kolhapur.

In 1894, there were nine municipalities in the Kolhapur State including that of Malkapur and Ichalkaranji, the respective capitals of feudatory chiefs of Vishalgad and Ichalkaranji. Two more municipalities at Kagal and Kodoli were newly created in the period of Shahu.

The most important of all these municipalities, was the city Municipality of Kolhapur. In the modern age of Indian History, Lord Ripon had played a pioneering role to teach Indians, the art of local-self-government. "The Vice Royalty of Lord Ripon only lasted for four years", commented Lord Curzon, "still it excited of all classes, who have ever since canonised him as the real author of that advance towards Self-Government and nationhood".<sup>80</sup> Shahu Maharaja followed the same course for training his people in the affairs of their self government. In 1920, he handed over the control and management of the Kolhapur Municipality to the public.<sup>81</sup> The principle of communal representation was introduced in the elective system as his subjects were divided into many religions and castes. The President of the Managing Committee for the first three years, as was directed by the State,

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791 The names of those Municipalities: 1) Kolhapur 2) Vadgaon 3) Hatkalangada 4) Shirol 5) Narsoba Wadi 6) Gadhinglaj 7) Katkol 8) Malakapur 9) Ichalkaranji.

80. Curzon, - British Government of India, Vol. II, P. 258.

81. RGAK, for 1920-21, P. 29.

was to be the nominee of the State, but thereafter, he was elected by the elected members of the Managing Committee. Thus in 1920 the Principle of elective democracy was introduced by Shahu beginning with the Municipal administration in his State.

Education was not an item under the normal duties of a Municipality. In the lands of Brahmins and Saints, even though all the municipalities were dominated and governed by the Brahmin elite class, education remained universally neglected. It was a sheer tragedy that the caste known for learning neglected learning, Shahu, however, took the cause of learning and introduced a system of granting regular grants out of the Municipal funds to the educational institutions in Kolhapur.<sup>82</sup>

Water is life to men and crops alike. Population of Kolhapur was increasing and problem of the water supply became an acute one. The Kalamba tank therefore was constructed and by iron taps water was brought to Kolhapur. The roads in the city were also metalled. The kerosine oil lamps in the city streets were regularly lighted and maintained. And to replace the kerosine oil lamps, the Kolhapur Electric Supply Company was established and setting up lamp posts and furnishing light were brought into existence. For the safety of the public in the city, private buildings unsafe for domestic purposes were brought to the notice of the building owners and got either repaired or demolished.

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82. Ibid., P.30

Drainage system was introduced and all the amenities of modern life were sought in the working of the Kolhapur Municipality.

### 3 PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION

"The Production and Distribution" maintains balance of a state economy. In Kolhapur, this section was divided into sixteen subheads and important of them were - 1)Agriculture, 2)Forests, 3)Public Works-The Radhanagari Dam 4) Manufacturers and Industries.

#### AGRICULTURE

Agriculture was the main source of staple food. But, the old system of tilling the soil as well as negligence on the part of peasants, failed to give desired output (from it). As the Maharaja was aware of this fact, it was stated by him that, "If the national welfare is to be attained, the first thing that would be done is to improve agriculture. At present the agricultural productivity is very low in India as compared with the western countries.... Kolhapur State will give liberal assistance for carrying on research in making a better plough and a better "moth" on which depend the progress of every farmer".<sup>83</sup>

At the time when Shahu started his career, starvation, famine and poverty were the regular features of the Kolhapur life.

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83. Jadhao, B.B., - Op.cit. P.120.

As if, those were natural calamities, people lived as was possible to them. The revolutionary spirit of Shahu could not tolerate that state of life. He turned to utilize human calibre prudently for developing agriculture. And his multipronged strategy consisted of - 1) Construction of minor and major water works for irrigation and supplying drinking water, 2) Agricultural extension works including agricultural education, 3) Advancing interests - free or subsidised loans to the farmers for digging wells and procuring other improved farm inputs, 4) Encouraging Co-operative credit and business, and 5) Exploitation of forest wealth.<sup>84</sup>

\* To what cash-crops are called today were known in those days as non-food crops and included - tobacco, sugarcane, oil seeds, cotton and other fibers. Side by side in the time of Shahu, plantation of tea and coffee was highly encouraged at the Panhala Hills.<sup>85</sup>

Uptill the completion of the Radhanagari dam, agricultural lands were depending upon the whims of the monsoon. Sometimes heaviest rains upto 140.8 inches were in Bavada and the lowest, at Shirol being 9.65 inches only. Production of food grains, therefore, required to Kolhapur was not constant. In the time of acute shortage in <sup>an</sup> exceptional circumstances, under Shahu, provision was made to import food grains from outside and measures were taken to check the prices.<sup>86</sup>

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84. Ghuge, V.B. - Chhatrapati Shahu's Socialist Economic Policies (1894-1922), P.90.

85. RGAK., for 1894-95, P.85.

86. Ibid., for 1896-97, P.69.



At the end of March 1897, prices were shot high and some social service-minded people in Kolhapur collected in that great famine Rs.8,500/- for opening a grain shop at a rate rather cheaper than the cost price. To make up the loss that was likely to incur upon the grain shop, grants were given from the 'Guarantee Fund' created by the State on the advice of Shahu. In some places where it was found that the grain dealers had no stock of food grains, nor money where with to make purchase, the Darbar advanced money to these dealers without an interest. In some places dealers were persuaded to sell grains at reasonable prices.<sup>87</sup> Nowhere, in any native State, such a policy to help people was adopted except the Kolhapur State. From this point, it is easy to form an idea about the idealism and ideas of a welfare State that Shahu had in his mind from his young days.

#### THE KING EDWARD AGRICULTURAL INSTITUTE

This institute was started by Shahu, to give scientific and systematic training to students from the peasants community and help the peasants to increase their agricultural outputs. This institution used to send a few students every year to the agricultural schools at Loni-Kalbore, Jambhul, etc. to receive instructions. The expenses to be incurred in this connection were, as desired by the Maharaja, to be borne by the institution itself.<sup>88</sup> Without prosperity and change in the life of peasants,

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87. Ibid., P. 76

88. Ibid., for 1920-21, P.36.

progress of a country or social change was not possible. Slowly, therefore, Shahu took measures like the foundation of this Agricultural Institution for changing the old attitude of the farmers, at least, in regard to using scientific methods and new implements.

### FORESTS

In the Kolhapur State proper, except in the east, there were forests of high yields. During the year 1895-96 on the orders of Shahu Maharaja, the forest produce, instead of depositing in the 'Forest Depots' and selling them directly to contractors, was brought to Kolhapur and sold to different purchasers. And remaining of it was exported to Bombay by rail. This practice made a tremendous increase in profits from forests.

Every year, out of the total timber, a definite amount of it was given freely to the poor neighbours in the nearby villages by order of the Maharaja.<sup>89</sup>

### PUBLIC WORKS

From the time of Shahu's rule, the expenditure on the Public Works in the Kolhapur State was on ascending scale. Buildings for the use of State and public utility were built. Palace Theatre which is now known as Keshavrao Bhosale Natyagriham, playgrounds like Khasbag for wrestling, and polo grounds, dams  
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89. Ibid, for 1895-96, Ch. IV, P. 11.

like Radhanagari were constructed out of state funds. After visiting England in 1902, Shahu thought of reconstructing Kolhapur on the western pattern but by preserving the Marathi culture and tradition.

#### TH-E RADHANAGARI DAM<sup>90</sup>

In the early days of 1907, a scheme of a large irrigation project by damming the Bhogavati River near Dajipur, about thirty miles to the west of Kolhapur, was undertaken by Shahu Maharaja. According to Latthe, "The idea seems to have occurred to him while he was touring in England five years back". Further, Latthe told that the Maharaja was struck to know while in England that every source of wealth and power was being utilized by the British with a care and forethought which ought to be emulated by every one in India.<sup>91</sup>

Thus, with this much deep understanding, the work of Radhanagari dam was started. Without economic progress, social and political reforms do not go ahead on the lines which one desires. Shahu Maharaja, therefore, was deeply concerned with the work of that dam. He had once said in connection with that dam, - "My life's work will have been done when I complete this project".<sup>92</sup>

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90. In memory of his daughter's marriage in 1911 with the Rajasaheb of Dewas, Shahu Maharaja constructed a new town near the Laxmi tank at Dajipur and named it Radhanagari, after his daughter's name. Now the Dam as well as Laxmi tank are popularly known only by one name as 'Radhanagari Dam.'

91. Latthe, A.B., - Op.cit., Vol.I, P.286.

92. Ibid.

However for carrying out such a large scheme with limited resources in the Kolhapur State, the Maharaja had faced very grave economic difficulties. Even then from the commencement of the work to the year 1915-16, the total amount spent was counted to Rs.8,93,243/-.<sup>93</sup> In 1919, the work which was suspended in 1917, was restarted. And during Shahu's period, an amount of Rs.13,36,130/-<sup>94</sup> was spent on it. However, the work was ~~xx~~ incomplete and restarted by his son Rajaram Chhatrapati in 1930. Lastly it was completed fully in 1957 with hydroelectric reservoir.<sup>95</sup> Thus a view can be formed from above information that Shahu had thoroughly thought of changing the society from old rustic agricultural life to modern one, based on economic progress and prosperity.

#### MANUFACTURERS AND INDUSTRIES

The well-known dictum that 'Industries are honey giving hives for a State', was understood by Shahu, right from his accession to power. He looked upon this item from point of double profit that it helps to solve problem of unemployment and secondly it adds substantially by way of taxes to the State treasury. By starting the Shahu Chhatrapati Spinning and Weaving Mills of Kolhapur in 1906, he had laid down the first stone of industrialisation of modern Kolhapur. It was, in fact, the

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93. RAGAK., for 1915-16, P.28.

94. Latthe, A.B., - Op.cit. P.94.

95. Ghuge,V.B., - Op.cit., P.94.

realisation of his prolonged<sup>\*</sup> thoughts of industrialisation. For this Mills<sup>6</sup>, he gave a large amount of State Funds in the equity shares as the capital of the Company.<sup>96</sup> In 1910, Shri Yuvaraj Rajaram Oil Mill was set up. The Wood Distillation Factory was established at Radhanagari in 1920 for producing Charcoal tar, acetic acid, etc.<sup>97</sup> In 1915, Shahu Mills was nationalised on account of its mismanagement and inefficiency.<sup>98A</sup> Thus, the State owned factories in the Kolhapur, were the Shahu Mills, the Yuvaraj Rajaram Oil Mill and the Wood Distillation Factory at Radhanagari.

Shahu, with all the limited resources of his State, encouraged private sector from the beginning. Because of this at the close of his career, the number of Ginning Factories was increased to 7, of which 2 were at Kolhapur, 3 at Gadhinglaj, one at Shirol road or the present Jayasingpur and one at Ichalkaranji.<sup>98B</sup> While opening new industries, balance of development, so also feasibility of raw material and availability of cheap labour were given priority. A free hand help provided liberal concessions to private ~~interpreneurs~~ entrepreneurs. Free of cost lands, tax free registration and donations from his Khasgi or private purse brought up enthusiastic persons in Kolhapur as industrialists. During the period of 1910-1915 at Shahupuri, the newly established market area in Kolhapur (by Shahu Maharaja himself)

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96. RGAK, for 1906-07, P.37 and for 1910-11 P.33.

97. Ibid, for 1920-21, P.40.

98A. Ibid, for 1915-16, P.37.

98B. Kulkarni, Mina and B.S., - Shri Shahu Chhatrapatinche Arthakaran, P.68.

and at important taluka places like Gadhinglaj new industries like Shirgaonkar Oil Mills, Shahupuri Groundnut Oil Factories at Shahupuri and Gadhinglaj, the Ginning factories at Jaysingpur, Ichalkaranji, the Datar and Co. Saw Mills at Shahupuri, the Indian Cycle and Motor Co. Ltd., Kolhapur and such other firms were established.

In the old system of India, flour of food grains was to be made yoking a woman to a hand made utensil Jata of two stone grinding wheels. It also ate lot of time and much labour of a woman. In place of that old Jata, new machine-made grinding mills began to come up in Kolhapur. To women, it was a boon, but people in those days did not like to have flour of their food grains through such grinding mills. The world of today in India is entirely different. We accept new things so eagerly and enthusiastically. But the old society in India as well as in Kolhapur looked upon new change with suspicion and fear. People in that time required encouragement. Shahu, even in such simple matters was ahead of all his contemporaries to encourage and appreciate. This had made Kolhapur to have seven grinding mills in 1920-21.<sup>99</sup> Thus the Kolhapur people were made to be accustomed to grinding mills and company of industries.

#### THE KOLHAPUR STATE RAILWAYS ✓

The Kolhapur State Railway, actually began its functioning from 1891, although the work of its construction was started in

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99. RGAK, for 1920-21, P.39.

1888.<sup>100</sup> The State treasury in Kolhapur, had a very valuable asset of annual profit of a handsome amount for every year. The Kolhapur people were facilitated to increase their trade and contacts with the other parts of Maharashtra and India. Because of this railway, Kolhapur was attached to Poona-Belgaum Railway-line of Madras Southern Maratha Railway of the British time. The exports and imports of Kolhapur therefore, became cheaper and easy. Under items of exports were 1) Apparel including draper and c, 2) Cotton yard, etc., 3) Dyes and Tans 4) Chemicals excepting Saltpetre 5) Fodder (oil cake-grass etc.) 6) Fruits and vegetables - Hides, horns, etc. and imports included Hemp, Jute, Lac, Liquors, spirits, metal mineral substances, oils, spices, sugar, tea, tobacco, etc.<sup>101</sup> The liberal rules for exports and imports and cheap transportation facility by railway, helped to maintain prices of essential goods and to fulfil needs of the State. The Kolhapur Railway again as other Railways in India, forced the conservative people who observed caste distinctions and untouchability strictly, to sit together in one compartment alongwith people of many low and high castes. It had indirectly loosened the dogmatic concepts of superiority and inferiority of caste status. Thus, under Shahu the State efforts were concentrated on forward policies and outlooks in modern times.

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100. B.C.B., - Op.cit., P.

101. RGAK., for 1920-21, P.36.

THE POSTAL DEPARTMENT

The Post and Telegraph offices in the Kolhapur were under the direct control of the Postal and Telegraphic Department of the British Government. Indirectly, all native States in India were thrown open to British access and secrecy in any native State was impossible. *Why Shahu was aware of the British and praised them sometimes* could have no reasons than the existence of this department.

4 THE FINANCE DEPARTMENT

The Reports on the General Administration of Kolhapur had dealt with the Finance Department under the head as 'Financial Review' and the Revenue and Finance of the Kolhapur State properly put in it. The income and expenditure were shown under four main heads - 1) General 2) Judicial 3) Revenue and 4) Military departments. Besides two more heads referring to the items of 1) Debts, Deposits and Advances, and 2) Alienations subjoined with remarks of explanation of causes for excess or deficiency. However, all these heads, during Shahu's period remained flexible and were changed according to the grade of its utilitarian value. Sometimes, there was to be a noticeable increase in expenditure under "Public Works and Khasgi"<sup>102</sup> Departments, but it was merely due to necessity for providing aid to the poor and needy, specially in the times of distress and misfortunes. After 1910, the

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102. Ibid, for 1895-96, P.84

103. Ghuge, V.B., Op.cit. P.



Khasgi expenditure was heavily increased, on account of starting to give donations<sup>103</sup> to educational institutes in Kolhapur and outside of it. Under items of Revenue Income, Opium and Ganja were to fetch a good amount of revenue comparing and considering the size of Kolhapur State. But surprisingly it was a point of happy note that rare offences were committed under the Opium Act in the State. The single shop system, commonly known as the "Madras System"<sup>104</sup> was continued to be in force by the Maharaja. The intention behind this system was that the commoners should not join it.

General stamps and Court fee stamps also raised the fund in the Huzur Treasury. Educational cess was also collected through a cess collector, one Assistant Cess collector had a Deputy Cess Collector at the district and Taluka levels. In a way, although the Kolhapur State Revenue was insufficient, it was very prudently and economically managed. All matters relating to all sorts of finances were operated under the direction of Shahu Maharaja and no money were spent ex-travagantly. Maharaja's plans, therefore, of rebuilding the whole Kolhapur State on ideal lines began to have some good shapes.

## 5 MEDICAL RELIEF

The Medical Relief department was the permanent feature of Kolhapur State under Shahu Maharaja. A social benefactor like

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103. Ghuge, V.B., Op.Cit. P.

104. RGAK., for 1920-21, P.42.

him could not neglect this branch of human service. Highly qualified persons in Medical Profession of those days, were recruited in the State Medical Services. (A male physician was to head the Male Department and a female, the female Department. In those days, ladies were timid and conservative to come out of their houses and get medical treatment at the hands of male physician. Understanding this difficulty of women, arrangements of independent heads for male and female sections were made.

Shahu Maharaja was personally interested in the service of the ill<sup>105</sup>s. In the plague of 1896-97 he himself moved to plague, stricken area to help people and actively participated in the plague controlling efforts of the State Medical Department. The Medical Department, also, due to Maharaja's eagerness, remained always alert and vigilant. The modern section of the Indoor and Out-door patients, surgical operations, Medico-legal cases, epidemic diseases, labour cases, and others, were maintained and equipped properly. A nurse's class was opened in the Albert Hospital for giving training to nurses. The Darbar Surgeon was to inspect annually all the medical dispensaries and institutions. Maharaja had a strict watch on the working of all the officers.

A nominal medical charges, specially from those who were able and willing to pay, were collected directly from patients. Generally, poor were treated at the cost of the State Funds. For patients suffering from tuberculosis, as this disease was more

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105. Tophkhane, V.D., - Rajarshi Shri Shahu Chhatrapati Yanche Antarang, P. 89.

dangerous and incurable in those times, a special dispensary known as Sir Claude Hill Sanatorium was constructed on a most pleasant and beautiful site on the Trimbuli Hill, situated to the east of the city.<sup>106</sup>

A Lunatic Asylum - a dispensary for the lunatics was established with <sup>b</sup> @ suitable staff members in 1917. It was the best equipped and administered by the State. Efforts were made here through research, to know the reasons, man becoming a patient of lunatics. Through the findings of this Lunatic Asylum, it was discovered the "main causes of insanity may be attributed to ganja-smoking, self-abuse, land and domestic quarrels".<sup>107</sup> To serve the lepers in the Kolhapur State, a Leper Asylum known as Victoria Diamond Jubilee Leper Asylum was established and run by the State from 1897. In the time of Shahu a lot of improvements were made in it and all the male and female lepers were kept separately and helped with all the necessities of life. We see, thus, no stone remained unturned in the regime of Shahu for helping people suffering from various diseases.

## 6 INSTRUCTION

So far public instruction was concerned, the Kolhapur State had a very commendable work than any native State in the Deccan. In 1844, the first anglo-vernacular school in Kolhapur was opened

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106. RGAK, for 1920-21, P.47.

107. Ibid.

by the British Government as in those days temporary charge of the Kolhapur State was under the British Superintendent in Kolhapur. After the untimely death of Rajaram Chhatrapati in 1870, this school was raised in the memory of him to High School and named as the Rajaram High School. The Kolhapur Government then raised this school to the status of a college in 1880,<sup>108</sup> with the addition of the previous class corresponding to the present Pre-University class. From 1883, this college was permitted by the Bombay University to open First B.A. class corresponding to B.A. second year class of the present time.

However, what factor led Shahu to take unequivocal and steadfast stand for imparting instructions to general public is not yet accurately told. One ~~incidence~~, of course, appeared in the Kolhapur State Gazette on 20th January 1894, gives a clue to understand the situation. A Brahmin teacher named Vasudev Krishna Narwane of Mudshingi School, reported to the Education Department that his school would not function from the 1st January 1894. The teacher was the paid servant of the State and received Rs.7/- per month as his salary from the State treasury. But, to the surprise of that teacher, instead of closing the school, the Government appointed a new teacher in his place, continued the school and removed Narwane from that post.<sup>109</sup>

Shahu's coming to power had aptly described by the late M.S.Shinde as the beginning of the rise of social change and new

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108. West Capt., W. - The Diary of the Raja of Kolhapur, P.117.

109. KSG., Vol.I, dated 20-1-1894, P.15.

age.<sup>110</sup> The commoners in Kolhapur, so also in Maharashtra held Shahu, even today in high esteem due to the fact that after Mahatma Phuley, it was he alone in Marathi land who tried to open doors of education to them.

The total number of schools maintained at the expense of the State together with those in the feudatory dependencies of Vishalgad, Bayda, Kagal, Kapsi and Ichalkaranji was 221 and the Scholars 14, 779 in 1894-95.<sup>111</sup> The percentage of literacy in the whole State, there was counted to 5 to 6% only and the peasants hardly understood the simple logic and mathematics in their day-to-day life and economic bargains.<sup>112</sup>

According to the Report of General Administration of Kolhapur for the year 1894-95, the Department of Education was classified under the heads as - 1) The Rajaram College, 2) The High School, 3) The Special Sardar's Classes, 4) The training for School Master, 5) Examination of Primary and Secondary Schools, 6) Girls' Schools, 7) Technical School 8) Education of Mohamedans, 9) Education of low castes, 10) Private Schools, 11) Kolhapur Infantry School and 12) The Public Service Certificate Examination.<sup>113</sup> In the time of Shahu, this department, as education of his subjects was his prime interest, went under

110. Shinde, M.S., - Vijayimarathakar Shripatrao Shinde, P.5. ~~111~~. RGAK, for 1894-95, P.129.

112. Modak, P.B., - Report of the Industrial Survey of Kolhapur State, P.134, Bombay 1896.

This Report is a first detailed account of the Industrial Survey of Kolhapur with sound suggestions. Its surveyor, the late P.B. Modak had begun his work in March 1892 and submitted it to the State in 1895 and published in 1896 from Bombay. See above Ref. No. 112, P.104.

113. RGAK, for 1894-95, - Contents P.iii.

drastic changes and ultimately brought up to present concepts as -  
 1) Primary Education 2) Secondary Education 3) Higher Education,  
 Industrial Education and Private Institutions under Royal  
 patronage.<sup>114</sup>

" In the life struggle of the present times, a society educationally well set up can only survive"<sup>115</sup> said Shahu at his speech delivered in Nasik on the 16th April 1920. And right from his royal career, education had become the subject of his heart.

#### PRIMARY EDUCATION

In 1894-95, at the first year of Shahu's career there were schools including the schools in the feudatories in the Kolhapur State as 140 Vernacular day-schools with 9695 students, 4 Night schools with 145 total strength, 35 Aided indigenous schools teaching with 1,111 students, and 27 Vernacular Girls' schools of 1436 girls.<sup>116</sup> The total, thus came to 12,387 of students and expenditure incurred on the primary education was amounted to Rs.2,16,291/- and the cost per pupil per annum was Rs.5.7 for day schools, Rs.4.4 night scholars, Rs.6.4 private school scholars, 2.2 indigenous school scholars and Rs.8.98 for the girl school scholars.<sup>117</sup>

As before, the Urdu Marathi Schools, as well as Urdu Marathi Classes attached to Marathi schools,<sup>118</sup> were encouraged

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114. Ibid., 1921-22, Contents - P.ii.

115. Jadhao, B.B., Op.cit., P. 78.

116. RGAK., for 1894-95, P. 129.

117. RGAK., for 1894-95, P. 131.

118. Ibid., P. 136.

and education of the Mohamedan subjects in Kolhapur was ever patronised.

The primary education went under drastic change in the time of Shahu Maharaja. To him, primary education was most essential for commoners. In this regard he said that his subjects including all castes and religions, if would have acquired knowledge of Standard III, he would have gladly handed over the State administration to them.<sup>119</sup>

The number of Vernacular schools for boys and girls, was increased every year with certain pit falls, but in general the trend was as one of ascending scale. During the year 1896-97, Shahu had turned particularly to the education of the Mahars the second majority caste in Kolhapur and in Maharashtra and started a Mahar School at Alta.<sup>120</sup> in 1897. Besides schools for hill tribe people like Bhills, Khonds, Santhals, Berads and Kolis were also opened. Before Shahu's coming to power, there were no schools for hill tribe people. Hence his efforts in this regard were certainly noteworthy. During 1913-14, the city Municipality of Kolhapur was made to pay an annual grant of Rs.10,000 as part payment of the expenditure incurred by the State on Primary education in the Kolhapur city.<sup>121</sup> This made a good precedent for using a small amount of Municipality funds in aid of educational activities.

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119. Jadhao, B.B., Op.cit., P.74.

120. RGAK, for 1896-97, P.100.

121. Ibid, for 1913-14, P. 57.

After coming from England in 1902, Shahu's thoughts of <sup>1129</sup> uplifting his rayats were highly engaged in introducing new schemes and projects. Even in the educational field, he wanted to make a revolution by way of taking educational centres at the door of his rayats. A Committee, he had therefore, appointed in 1912-13 to explore the possibility for giving primary education free of charge in the Kolhapur State.<sup>122</sup>

The education department continued to receive the special attention of Shahu Maharaja. In fact, in no other department had his liberality been more conspicuous. Notwithstanding the efforts in the progress upto 1912 for the spread of education among the Backward classes<sup>123</sup> (non-Brahmins) were not satisfactory according to Shahu. With a view to accelerate the pace, he had decided to broaden the foundations and make primary education accessible to all. "His Highness" had therefore been pleased to order that "every village in the State should have a school conducted by a person of the caste to which the majority of the villagers belong."<sup>124</sup> In order to induce suitable persons to work, he suggested to have the school masters in the list of feudatory village servants holding alienated land for the performance of their duties. Accordingly, to work out the scheme a Committee with ~~m~~ Pirajirao Ghatage the Chief of Kagal Sr., as its head, was appointed in 1912. But the proposal giving free

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122. Ibid.

123. Backward class - the word in those days was the general term for those who were below the Brahmins and above the untouchables.

124. RGAK, for 1912-13, P. 49.



primary education in the State remained under consideration till the year 1917-1918. This was owing not only due to the outbreak of the First World War, but owing to the ignorance of the population. Even under Shahu's directions, the attendance of the school going children in Vishalgad and Ichalkaranji was reduced instead of increasing.<sup>125</sup>

\* The year 1917-18 the Kolhapur State witnessed the most noteworthy event of the adoption of the policy by the Darbar of making primary education free and compulsory throughout the State.<sup>126</sup> Shahu Maharaja felt the supreme necessity of raising the literacy of the State subjects to the fullest extent. A new department had, therefore, been created with Prof.R.N.Apte, LL.B., F.R.C.S., as the Director and Prof. R.B.Panditrao as Educational Inspector for establishing free primary schools in all the villages of the State to which the Compulsory Primary Education Act,<sup>127</sup> had been made applicable and the first school under the free and compulsory Education Act was opened by Shahu himself at Chipari Peta, Taluka Karvir on the 4th March 1918.<sup>128</sup> And during the last year of his career, knowingly or unknowingly that it was his last year, Shahu had made all the primary schools, including aided and non-aided free and compulsory.<sup>129</sup> The total number of institutions including the free and compulsory schools

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125. Ibid., for 1915-16, P.43.

126. Ibid., for 1917-18, P.39

127. KSG., Part I dated 21st Sept.1917, P.110.

128. RGAK., for 1918-19, P.45.

129. Ibid., for 1921-22, P.51.

was counted to 559 with 31,096 students on which Rs.3,01,583 were spent in 1921-22.<sup>130</sup>

#### EDUCATION OF THE UNTOUCHABLES

Facilities to provide education to the untouchables in the Kolhapur State were in existence before Shahu. But like the Backwards or the non-Brahmins the untouchables were also not eager to learn. Under Shahu Maharaja special impetus was given for opening schools in their locality. The schools named as the low caste schools or the Mahar schools were opened at Taluka places. But such schools at Kasba Bavda, Gadhinglaj and Bhadgao were closed for want of boys in 1918-19.<sup>131</sup> However, because of the Boarding facilities newly created and free education Act, although the number of low caste schools was reduced from 27 to 19, strength of the students was increased from 378 boys and 23 girls to 445 boys and 33 girls in 1918-19.<sup>132</sup> Secondly again, after closing their special schools with an order they had been absorbed in all the Government Schools. And notification in this regard was published in the Gazette of 11th October 1919 and it runs as :

" In the Karveer State (excluding its feudatories) there are special schools for the untouchables. All such schools from this Dassera have been closed. And the untouchable children should have been admitted in the Government Schools like all

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130. RGAK., for 1921-22, P.51

131. Ibid., for 1918-19, P.45.

132. Ghuge, V.B., Op.cit., P.70 (see table B)

other people. Since untouchability is not to be observed in the Government schools, children of all the castes and religions should be seated together".<sup>133</sup>

Prior to this order, a 'Notification' of the 22nd August, 1919 was published in the Gazette of the 23rd August 1919 asking the Education Department to follow humanitarian way while ~~xx~~ treating the untouchables in various institutions. Further he warned in the same Notification as -

"Most certainly everyone from the Principal to the lowest Master will be taken to task and any help given to private bodies will be taken back if the untouchables are not given equal treatment".<sup>134</sup>

Then he earnestly desired that the Educational Bodies receiving help would follow the good example set in by the American Mission at Miraj and the good examples set in the St. Xavier and Wilson Colleges and Mission Schools in Bangalore, Panchagani and Arya Samaj Schools, Colleges and Gurukuls and also by the Railway Authorities where no difference is made between touchables and untouchables. And if these institutions neglect<sup>y</sup> his orders, provision was made to fine them, in the same Notification upto 7% of the movable property or in accordance with the special rules.

Thus, under Shahu Chhatrapati the education of the untouchables was enhanced to progress.

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133. KSG. Part I dated 11th October 1919, P.160.

134. Ibid., 23-8-1919, P. 46.

EDUCATION OF WOMEN

At the beginning of Shahu's career there were, 27 Vernacular Girls schools and 1436 girl-scholars attending various schools in the State. The total expenditure incurred on the education of women was Rs.9,570 and was counted to Rs.8.8 per pupil per annum.<sup>135</sup> While on his First State Tour to Gargoti in 1896, the people of that place seemed anxious to have girls' school and Shahu Maharaja gave immediate order for one being opened there.<sup>136</sup> To enhance the progress of women education, a number of State and voluntary scholarships like the Sakwarbai Ranisaheb Scholarship, the Ahilyabai Scholarship, Kamalabai Owalekar Scholarship, Mrs. Parr's Prize, the Waller Prize, Radhabai Akkasaheb Maharaj and Mrs. Shirgaonkar Prizes etc., were granted and regularly paid to eligible girls students from time to time.<sup>137</sup>

In the last year of the Maharaja's life, there were 33 Girls' Primary Schools and 1,726 girl students. The total expenditure on the female education of primary section was Rs.14,425/-.<sup>138</sup> A separate Female Education Department was created with a Female Educational Inspector. Very encouraging feature of female education was this that the late Indumati Ranisaheb, the wife of the late Prince Shivaji, Shahu's second son was taught upto Matriculation and Maharaj intended to send her for Medical Education.<sup>139</sup>

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135. RGAK., for 1894-95, Pp.129 & 131.

136. Ibid., for 1895-96, Ch.I. P.6.

137. Ibid., for 1921-22, P.52.

138. Ibid., P.51.

139. Suryawanshi, G.K., - Indumati Ranisaheb, P.185.

Naturally there were High School and College going girls in 1921-22 and their number was 192 students. No fees were charged to girl students in Rajaram College and special prizes were awarded to successful lady students in all the college classes.<sup>140</sup> Thus women<sup>\*</sup> education was highly attended to and encouraged by Shahu Maharaja.

### SECONDARY EDUCATION

The item of secondary schools in 1894-95 was meant only the middle schools and hence the classification of the schools or education under Chapter "Institution"<sup>141</sup> was shown rather differently. After readjusting it, including those "10 Secondary Schools" the number of secondary schools according to present understanding comes to 12 which included two High Schools with 410 students namely that of Rajaram High School and Aided High School of the American Mission with 73 students. The so-called secondary schools had 1720 students. Thus the total strength was 2203 and the total expenditure incurred on this branch of education was Rs.11,120/- and cost of per pupil per annum of 83.61, for High Schools and Rs.25.06 of First Grade and Rs.5.03 of the Second Grade Schools.<sup>142</sup> In 1918-19, the Rajaram High School was separated from the Rajaram College and from 1919-20, the control of this college management was transferred from the

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140. Sabnis, R.V., - Notes on Kolhapur, P.61.

141. RGAK., for 1894-95, P. 129.

142. Ibid., P.55.

Darbar to the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, U.P.<sup>143</sup> The number of English Educational Institutions in 1921-22 was 23 and the scholars attending 2138.<sup>144</sup> Of the 503 boys on the roll of Rajaram High School, 125 were Brahmins, 171 Marathas, 140 other Hindus including jains, 29 Mohamedans and 32 belonging to the Depressed Classes and amount of Rs.24,150/- was spent on them.

On the 31-3-1922 the total number of students was (counted) to 31,096 and expenditure to Rs.30,01,583. Besides there were two Sanskrit Schools and 11 Veda Shalas including one at Ichalkaranji.

In private secondary schools there were (totally) 1335 students and Rs.34,685/- were incurred on their expenditure.<sup>145</sup> And for the first time in 1920-21, Kolhapur was permitted by the Bombay University as the University Centre for School Leave Examination.<sup>146</sup>

#### HIGHER EDUCATION

Ever since 1880, the Kolhapur Darbar had maintained, for the purpose of promoting higher education, Institution known as the Rajaram College, named after the late lamented Rajaram Maharaj. The Institution stood 4th in the list of Colleges affiliated to the University of Bombay even in 1921-22. The control of the management of this college had been transferred to the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, U.P. from 1919-1920. In 1894, C.H.Candy,

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143. RGAK., for 1919-20, P.52.

144. Ibid., for 1921-22, P.53.

145. Ibid., PP.App. XXII En. 22.

146. Ibid., P.53. See also Kulkarni Mina & B.S., - Shri Shahu Chhatrapatinche Arthakaran, P.112.

B.A., LL.B. was the Principal and the college consisted of three divisions namely, 1) the college preparing students for the previous and Intermediate Examinations, 2) the High School consisting of 7 standards, and 3) the Sardar's Classes.

The percentage of the non-Brahmin students including in those high schools was merely 9.20 % whereas of the Brahmins was 90.10%<sup>147A</sup> In 1922 this had been shown as 51.20% of the non-Brahmins and 48.80% of the Brahmins.<sup>147B</sup> Of course, it does not mean that the Brahmins stopped to go to schools and colleges, but the outside Brahmins of Kolhapur got such facilities in their jurisdiction as they were getting in Rajaram College. Hence instead of going to Kolhapur they continued their education in their regions. A satisfactory or say an encouraging point of Shahu's career, however was this that the non-Brahmins including the untouchables began to take lively interest in educational pursuits and their number was increased. But the percentage of literacy in those communities was very meagre. In 1893-94 out of total population only 2.80% were literates and that number was increased by Shahu to 4.40% in 1921-22.<sup>148</sup>

The Rajaram College, Kolhapur had made the highest contribution to making and reconstructing the present Maharashtra and Free and Democratic India. Eminent Rajaramians like Justice M.G. Ranade, G.K.Gokhale, N.C.Kelkar, Justice Dhavale and other great luminaries of India received their early lessons in Kolhapur and

147A. R&AK for 1893-94. pp. 51-52 and 147B. R&AK for 1921-22 p. 56.

148. Ibid., p. 57.

Rajaram College. The late N.C.Kelkar, popularly known as Sahitya Samrat Tatyasaheb Kelkar, and the right hand and well known great disciple of Lokmanya Tilak happened to be the student of Rajaram College from 1889 to 1890. While writing the reminiscences of his college days he described in 1931 that -

"It helps my mind to cross over in one step back to the years 1889 and 1890 which I spent so cheerfully at the Rajaram College, Kolhapur. Those were indeed primitive times compared with these days in point of the objective conditions of college education, equipment and surroundings. But in point of human nature and even ideology, we think we did not differ materially from the young collegecolts of today". He further said that "Miraj was London when Kolhapur was my Oxford. There was no Kolhapur State Railway in my time. I used to travel by bullock-cart".<sup>149</sup> So, those who could afford at least to bullock cart could attend college education. But to the commoners it was impossible.

Prof. Latthe, while describing his college days in the time of Shahu's career rightly remarked that "Years ago, the boys and the Professors were mostly Brahmins in this college".<sup>150</sup> It was Latthe who got opportunities for college education and progress in life under the <sup>8</sup>period and patronage of Shahu Maharaja. However one should not misunderstand him for his above statement but try to

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149. Kelkar, N.C., Rajaram Golden Jubilee Memorial Volume, 1931, P.9.

150. Latthe, A.B., Op.cit., P.6.



understand him and Shahu Maharaja<sup>as</sup> in the same article when he warned that "But it will do us no good in our national life if we help to create a situation which is bound to give rise to a non-Jain or non-Maratha or non-Lingayat feeling in any quarter. Our college has produced many great men, men like the late Mr. Gokhale who refused to join even a Conciliation Board as a representative of the Hindu Community. If we wish to evolve a great nationalism among us, we have to cease to think of ourselves as Jains or Marathas or any other caste or community".<sup>151</sup> This is what exactly Shahu Maharaja, the Chhatrapati of Kolhapur wanted to achieve through the progress of education.

The social position of parents of students on the college roll showed that a goodly number of students were the sons of persons of low means of livelihood. One reason for this was that the living in Kolhapur was cheaper than that of Bombay, Poona and other places. A fact which had, in no small measure, succeeded in attracting students from middle and lower classes of society, not to speak of other facilities afforded by this college on the support of the Maharaja.<sup>152</sup>

#### INDUSTRIAL EDUCATION

Shahu Maharaj was aware of the importance of the technical education. His own education under the guidance of the European teachers and his visit to England in 1902 made him to think of

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151. Latthe, A.B., - Op.cit., P.7.

152. RGAK., for 1921-22, P.53.

progress of Kolhapur on the western pattern. The first technical school, therefore, was opened in Kolhapur ~~in~~ 1903 in the name of his late father Jayasingrao Abasaheb and named as "Jayasingrao Ghatage Technical School". ~~At~~ the beginning a few number of the students was admitted in the school, but the strength had been increased in 1920-21 to 48, of ~~9~~ were Brahmins, 5 mohamedans, and 34 were non-Brahmins. And out of this total, 25 were learning in the Carpentry class and 23 in the Smithy and total expenditure incurred in 1920-21 was accounted to Rs.6,798/-.<sup>153</sup> On 15th August 1920, in the private section, Shri Rajaram Industrial School<sup>154</sup> was established under the patronage of the Maharaja. Thus the section of industrial education was also well attended.

#### SCHOOL BUILDINGS

School buildings in those days were very rare and construction of them at all the places of school was impossible. Usually village temples were used for school purposes. Naturally, ~~in~~ every village school buildings or temples wherever schools were held, were kept clean and neatly. The Government officers of the rank of Mamlatdars, head clerks and others found these school buildings useful for their lodges while they were on visits to villages. As a result of their stay in school buildings unofficial holidays were declared and poor teachers had no courage to complain against this system to their superiors. But by and by

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153. RGAK., for 1920-21, P. 55.

154. Jadhao, B.B., Op.cit., P.116.

the news was brought to the kind notice of the Maharaja and after getting full inquiry into the matter he ordered all the Government servants for not using school buildings as lodges.<sup>155</sup> Further he ordered to build school buildings and Chavadi at one place if it was possible.<sup>156</sup> By this, he wanted supervision over the work of the school teacher by the officials visiting a Chavadi.

#### KOLHAPUR - THE MOTHER OF BOARDING HOUSES

In those days, only the openings of schools was not sufficient to make people learn. Present type of facilities like transportation, inns, hotels and schools at every village and schools and colleges near<sup>by</sup> the villages, were not available. Problem of residence of the students as well as of their boarding was very acute. Without these facilities there was no hope of acquiring knowledge. With this view in mind, as a remedy against poverty of clever students and all such problems, the Maharaja asked (in 1896 his Darbar) to start a Boarding house in Kolhapur and declared also to start separate Boarding houses for students of various castes.<sup>157</sup> And on 18th April, 1901 the first of such boarding houses, the Victoria Maratha Boarding Institute in Kolhapur was established under the Chairmanship of Shrimant Dattajirao Ghatage. The grants of the boarding were raised from Rs.250/- in 1901 to Rs.550/- in 1920-21<sup>158</sup> plus agriculture lands at Bhedasgaon<sup>159</sup> were granted to it as a permanent source of income.

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155. RGAK., for 1896-97, P.4.

156. Marathe, K.D., Vathukum, P.226

157. RGAK., for 1896-97, P.4.

158. Ibid., for 1920-21, P.56.

159. Salunkhe, P.B., Shahu Gaurav Granth, P.67.

DIGAMBAR JAIN BOARDING INSTITUTE

In April 1901, the Digambar Jain Boarding was started at the Dasara Chowk, Kolhapur and the Government land in that Chowk was granted free of cost to that Institution by Shahu Maharaja. Annually Rs.350/- grant-in-aid was sanctioned from the first year of this institute and maintained the same throughout the life of the Maharaja. However after receiving inspiration from Shahu, the Jains in Bombay contributed generously to this Boarding, due to which new building construction began in 1904, at the gracious hands of Shahu Maharaja. During the year 1921-22<sup>160</sup> there were 68 students against 9 in 1901-02.<sup>161</sup>

MARATHA STUDENTS INSTITUTION

On April 17, 1904, the Maratha Students Institution was established under the direct patronage of Shahu Maharaja. With a beautiful big building, a handsome large amount along with agricultural lands, this institution was blessed. Here at this institution, more facilities were given to the poor students from the Maratha communities. In the course of time this boarding was called the "Shri Shahu Vasatigriha".<sup>162</sup>

VEERSHAIVA BOARDING INSTITUTE<sup>163</sup>

On the directives of Shahu, the leaders of the Lingayat community purchased to the west of Rankala tank, a building known

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160. RGAK., for 1921-22, P.56

161. Ibid., for 1901-02, P.43

162. Salunkhe, P.B., Edr., Shahu Gaurav Granth P. 68.

163. Ibid., P.69.

as Gholkar Bungalow for the Lingayat Boarding. There this boarding was started in July 1907. At the beginning this institute was granted Rs.250/- and was continued the same during the life of the Maharaja.

#### MOHAMEDAN BOARDING INSTITUTE

A word was given by Shahu to Muslim leader in Kolhapur in 1902, about starting a Boarding for their children. But it was delayed on some ground or the other. Meanwhile to help the students, accommodation was made available in the Victoria<sup>164</sup> Maratha Boarding and both the Maratha and Muslim students were kept together upto 1907. And it is the fact that as the Muslims were mostly ignorant and unable to run the affairs of that Institution, the Maharaja himself became the first President of the Mohamedan Boarding. He granted to this institute as other institutions, liberal grants and a piece of land.

#### MISS CLARKE HOSTEL OR ANTYAJA BOARDING INSTITUTE

On 14th February 1908, under the Presidentship of Annasaheb Latthe, the then Education Officer, at the Jain Boarding, Kolhapur, (the establishment of) the Antyaja Boarding Institution was declared open. Miss Violet Clarke, the only daughter of John Clarke, the Governor of Bombay, had collected through her dance Rs.5000/- and donated the same to this Boarding.

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164. Salunkhe, P.B., Op.cit. P.69

It was her mission to help the untouchables. After her premature demise, the Boarding was renamed as "Miss Clarke Hostel". The late D.S.Pawar, belonged to Chamar caste and a great disciple of B.R.Ambedkar was the student of this Hostel. Shahu Maharaja made him the first Chairman of the Standing Committee of Kolhapur Municipality. And according to J.P.Naik he was the first untouchable in India<sup>165</sup> who received such a high honour. Shahu Maharaja gave to this institution a piece of land and regular grants for every year.

#### DAIVADNYA BOARDING INSTITUTE

For the students belonging to the Sonar caste, this boarding was established in Kolhapur on 24th December, 1908. In 1914, Shahu Maharaja gave to this boarding a building alongwith surrounding open land and systematically laid down the foundation of this boarding.

#### NAMDEVA BOARDING INSTITUTE

At the gracious hands of Prince Rajaram and Prince Shivaji the sons of Shahu, the Namdeva Boarding was started on 2nd April 1911 at the Shukrawar Peth, Kolhapur. A big building was purchased for this purpose at the cost of the State.

Thus to provide facilities to the students of various castes and religions, Shahu Maharaja had helped from his state treasury and personally encouraged the leaders of all the castes

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165. Naik, J.P., Op.cit., P.64.

to start boardings at Kolhapur. And after 1911, that in the restarting of the Satya Shodhak Samaj in Kolhapur,<sup>166</sup> the movement received a great momentum. And the Panchal Brahmin Boarding of 1912, Shrimati Saraswatibai Gaud Saraswat Brahmin Boarding, of 20th May 1915, Indian Christian Hostel of 7th June 1915, Rao Bahadur Sabnis Prabhu Boarding of September 1915, Arya Samaj Gurukul Boarding of 18th March, 1918, Vaishya Boarding of 1918, Indumati Boarding or Dhor-Chambhar Boarding of 1919, Shivaji Vaidik Vidyalaya Boarding of 6th July, 1920, Shri Prince Shivaji Maratha Boarding House of 1st July 1920, Sutar Boarding of 6th 1921, Nabhik Boarding of 24th July 1921, Somavanshiya Arya Kshtriya Boarding of 15th August, 1920 and Shridevang Boarding for the Koshthi Caste students of 1920 were started at Kolhapur on the initiative and guidance of Shahu Maharaja. He was lover of learning and wanted to spread education in all the sections of his subjects. Without education he saw no progress in the life of man. Hence while addressing a conference of the Nirashrit Somavanshiya people on 16th April, 1920, he told that "For the education of different castes of the backward classes, making special provisions to provide scholarships to them. I got their boardings established. After spending 25 years, now only some good effects are seen of the educational progress in my State."<sup>167</sup> In addition to this hostel movement in Kolhapur

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166. Pawar, K.R., Op.cit., P. 108.

167. Bhosale, S.S. - Krantisuktre, P.35.

Shahu Maharaja had established and conducted hostel managements at Poona, Ahmednagar, Nasik and Nagpur also. In 1921, at Patgaon, Gargoti, he started Kshatra Jagatguru Peetha - to give religious education to non-Brahmins. At Kolhapur, a professional training school for the Jingar people was started and named as Kalagriha.<sup>168</sup> Even impetus was given to the education of the ~~nom~~ nomadic tribes, like, Gosavi, Manga Garudi and Kanjarbhat.<sup>169</sup>

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MISCELLANEOUS<sup>170</sup>

Under the Chapter "Miscellaneous" various items and sections as (1) Wild animals and Venomous Snakes (2) State Printing (3) Industrial Museum (4) Records (5) New Books (6) News Papers and Periodicals (7) Printing Presses (8) Libraries and Reading Rooms, (9) Annachhatras and (10) The Cooperative Societies were dealt properly to provide all the details of activities in every year. Thus administration in Kolhapur was efficiently managed to give direction towards the sound foundation of a society which required its reconstruction on the basis of economic progress, equality and social justice.

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168. Naik, T.B., Op.cit., P.79.

169. Ibid.

170. RGAK, for 1921-22 PP.59 to 61.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### IN QUEST OF LIBERATION

Shahu Chhatrapati seems to be basically a lover of mankind. His tours to various parts in his State, and his personal efforts thereby for redressing the grievances of his people, his orders to officers asking them to take no disadvantage of the ignorance of his subjects, his progressive measures to further the cause of education and upliftment of the masses, make us to hold him not merely as a king but a social revolutionary also. Against this background, it would be authentic and intrinsically explanatory to see as to why and how he turned to be a social revolutionary and what measures he had adopted to achieve his aims in that regard.

In 1920, Shahu Maharaja invited S.M. Fraser, his teacher to visit Kolhapur, because after retirement from the services, Fraser was to leave India permanently for home in England. While describing the grand receptions that he received at Kolhapur Fraser wrote -

"Every function arranged had special interest for us, revisiting Kolhapur after such a long absence, but the most memorable of all was the great public meeting when addresses of welcome were presented by eleven educational bodies in the course of which they referred to His Highness' successful efforts to encourage education

by founding hostels for every caste among his subjects."<sup>1</sup>

Here at the grand public meeting Shahu Maharaja (of <sup>8</sup>)  
 (Kolhapur) described as to how he started the work of mass  
 upliftment (as <sup>8</sup>) -

"It is after a quarter of a century Sir Stuart Fraser, that you have returned to Kolhapur and I welcome you most cordially. When I see Lady Fraser and yourself once more among us, happy recollections of the joyous time we had with you are brought back to me, and I feel as though that delightful period of boyhood had come back again. I consider myself very lucky indeed, that you have been able to pay us a visit, short as it has been, before your departure from India. It has given you an opportunity of seeing what fruit the pains you took with your pupil have borne. There is no doubt that Kolhapur has vastly changed since you saw it last. It is for you to judge in what direction the changes have been. During all this time it has been my earnest wish and constant endeavour to do everything in my power to educate the masses, to inspire them with a higher standard of life, to root out superstition and with it the causes that have lead to the singularly artificial state of our

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1. Latthe, A.B. Op.cit., Vol. II, Personal Reminiscences by Sir. S.M. Fraser, p. 632.

society", ... "the inequalities between man and man that we see on all sides."<sup>2</sup>

The Maharaja knew the age-old traditions and an unchangeable mind of the Hindus, so he continued his speech saying,

"The task is not easy nor the work light. The inertia of ages has to be overcome, and the old order of things has to be changed out and out. What part I played in bringing this about at least partially, it is not for me to say. If I have succeeded in any small measure, the credit belongs to those who have heartily worked with me. This is not the place or time to go into details of the measures introduced by me to carry out the end in view. The great War has opened our eyes. The last four years have witnessed the fall of the most despotic autocracies in the world, and unless we in India profit by the lesson worse evils may have to be faced by us and that is why I feel the crushing weight of the heavy work now before the Indian Ruling Prince, and I trust the moral fibre you have helped to develop in me may prove sufficiently strong to bear the strain."

But to understand Shahu, no one was better judge than his teacher S.M. Fraser. What Fraser opined, therefore, of his

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2. Latthe, A.B., Op.cit., Vol. II, Personal Reminiscences by Sir S.M. Fraser, pp. 632-633.

pupil's - Shahu's - social work certainly helps us to know the very instincts (in the mind) of Shahu about his task of social upliftment. The learned teacher, in the course of his talk delivered at the same function, while giving the replies to the honours done to him said -

"To return for a moment to the subject of your addresses. It is a common place today that the greatest need of India is better and wider spread of education, whether from the point of view of the moral and material uplift of the people, or (in British India) of their capacity to work successfully, the reformed scheme of Government, which is now being introduced. None will deny this principle, but the special merit of His Highness the Chhatrapati Maharaja, so it seems to me, is that for long years past he has made it his chief and personal aim in life to improve the condition of the masses, and as a means to this end has not only multiplied schools but has carried the gift of education to those classes which were too apathetic to seek of their own exertion, the facilities provided for all alike without distinction of caste and creed. No Indian Prince has from the first displayed a more great hearted sympathy

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3. Latthe, A.B., Op.cit., Vol. II, Personal Reminiscences by Sir S.M. Fraser, pp. 634-635.

with every class of his subjects, realizing that he is equally the father of the low caste and the high caste, of the Mahomedans and of the Indian Christians, as well as of the Hindus. And as a wise father recognizes a special duty towards the weak rather than the strong among his children. His Highness' policy has been specially to uplift the backward classes by encouraging them to share in the educational advantages enjoyed heretofore solely, by their more favoured brethren."<sup>4</sup>

The teacher, who was fully acquainted with the social structure and life in India continued his speech saying,

"Age long prejudices deep-rooted in the Indian social system make this a gigantic task and one which no individual can hope to complete in his life time. But with His Highness it has not been a case of mere aspirations for the future and all that one prince of courage, energy and determination to overcome difficulties could do, your Maharaja has done."

These two speeches, thus, of Shahu himself and his teacher make it clear that Shahu was bent upon the task of social upliftment. But in Maharashtra from 1896, the year in which Lokmanya Tilak started the Ganesh Utsava and the Shiva Jayanti celebration, a new wave of spirit for independence had begun.

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4. Latthe, A.B., Op.cit., Vol. II, pp. 634-635.

However, the Brahmins who started their activities against the British never treated the non-Brahmins on equal footing and could never imagine also of them sharing the opportunities of administrative responsibilities. And this phase of Indian society had remained, as Netaji Subhash also agreed, till the time Mahatma Gandhi took the leadership of the Congress in 1921.<sup>5</sup> The problem of this social understanding as well as that of social justice was not at all taken into account by the earlier leaders of the freedom movement and mostly all of them belonged to the Brahmin caste. Tukaram Tatya Padval an associate of Mahatma Phuley had, therefore, propagated in 1861, through his book "Jatibhed Vivekasar" that "if at all God desires to make India free - (Swatantra) on the lines of the other free nations in the world, Hinduism must go under drastic and revolutionary changes asking all men to observe no distinction between man and man."<sup>6</sup> Shahu Maharaja had also the same difficulty of seeking social justice and equality after starting educational institutions. Under the British in India, no princely state in India had power or courage to do things as its chief had desired. Because of his limited

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5. a) Kanji, Dwarkadas, 'India's Fight for Freedom 1913-1937 An Eye Witness Story, p. 63.

b) CROSSROADS: 'Work of Subhashchandra Bose 1938-1940, p.73 N.R.B. Calcutta.

6. Padval, T.T., Jatibhed Viveksar, p. 97 (The author, however, wrote pen-name as "Ek Hindu".

power, therefore, he was looking for agencies which devoted to the cause of social upliftment. And as the ideas and work of Satya Shodhak Samaj were nearer to his ideas, he and his followers thought to revive the same.<sup>7</sup>

#### THE SATYA SHODHAK MOVEMENT

Refusal to practice the old tradition of the Hindus and performing some ceremonies like the marriages without calling the Brahmin priests to perform such ceremonies, gave birth to new atmosphere known as the Satya Shodhak Movement. Mahatma Phuley is the father of this movement and in his life time, his followers, the Satya Shodhakas had performed many ceremonies and marriages of the non-Brahmins according to Hindu methods, but by their own non-Brahmin priests. Never before in India, ceremonies and rituals were performed by the non-Brahmins. It was the privilege and birth-right of the Brahmins. And for performing such ceremonies, worships, marriages by the hands of the Brahmins, the non-Brahmins had to pay some Dakshina (Fees) to the Brahmins. But by the movement of Satya Shodhakas, Brahmins were made to lose their Dakshina also. In one of the marriages in 1878 the Brahmins, therefore, from the Poona district filed a civil suit to make a marriage of non-Brahmins, void and to recover the Dakshina from them as their privilege.<sup>8</sup> By chance the verdict

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7. Naik, T.B., Op.cit., p. 43.

8. Keer, Dhananjay, Mahatma Jotirao Phuley, p. 201.

came in favour of the non-Brahmins although Justice M.G.Ranade opined to pay the amount of Dakshina to the Brahmins as their legitimate right.<sup>9</sup>

After explaining ~~once~~ the philosophy of the Satya Shodhak Samaj, Madhavrao Bagal, a Satya Shodhak and social reformer in Kolhapur said that because of noble philosophy of the Satya Shodhak Samaj, Shahu Maharaja was attracted towards it and started the Satya Shodhak movement.<sup>10</sup> Thus, the demand for equality by the commoners, and Shahu's desire to upgrade them as human beings equal to the status of the respected men in Hindu society renewed the movement. Latthe had also explained the same idea about the revival of this movement.<sup>11</sup>

So far as Shahu Maharaja was concerned, it was possible for him to force his Brahmin priest for performing the rituals as needed by him. But it was not possible to the ordinary Marathas who could have no power nor money to make a Brahmin to perform their ceremonies. Religious as well as economic difficulties of the non-Brahmins turned them towards the Satya Shodhak Samaj. During all those days, from the Vedokta affair onward, Shahu was neutral in regard to the Satya Shodhak

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9. Keer, Dhananjay, Mahatma Jotirao Phuley, p. 202.

10. Bagal, Bhai Madhavrao, Shahu Chhatrapatini Bhavi Pidhila Kay Dile, p. 9.

11. Latthe, A.B., Op.cit., Vol. II, p. 376.



Movement. But he visualized no change in the conservative attitude of the Brahmins and their love of the Chaturvarnya system. Due to this as Laxman Shastri Joshi has pointed out, after 1910 Shahu gave up his neutrality towards the Satya Shodhakas and helped its establishment<sup>12</sup> under the chairmanship of Parashram Ghosarwadkar, on the 11th January 1911, at Kolhapur.<sup>13</sup> Again it was not only in Kolhapur, but in the whole of Maharashtra, that the non-Brahmins felt the need of reviving the Satya Shodhak Samaj. In Poona also a conference<sup>14</sup> was held in 1911 under the presidentship of Ramayya Ayyavaru, a friend and colleague of Mahatma Phuley.<sup>15</sup>

12. Bedekar, D.K. and Bhanage, B.S. (Eds.) - Bharatiya Prabodhan, p. 258.

13. Pawar, R.K., Op.cit., p. 108.

14. Keer, Dhananjay, Shahu Chhatrapati, p. 209.

15. The new Conference adopted the principles of the Satya Shodhak Samaj as -

- 1) All men are the children of one God, and God is parent to all.
- 2) While approaching mother or father as we do not need intermediary, we should not need the same (broker) such as a priest or a preceptor while offering prayers to God.
- 3) Anybody who accepts these principles can become a member of the Satya Shodhak Samaj. See - Bagal, Bhai Madhavrao (Ed.) : Satya Shodhak Hira Mahotsava Grantha, p. 109.

In addition to these important principles, a rule was laid down for the members by which they had to take an oath -

"that I shall not require services of an intermediary at the adoring, worshipping or mediating upon God, and also at the time of performing a religious ceremony." See, Keer, Dhananjay, Op.cit., p. 209.

Then, only in the following year, on August 21, 1912, at Kolhapur the first Shravani<sup>16</sup> or thread ceremony of the Marathas was performed, in accordance with the Vedokta forms by the Maratha priests of the Satya Shodhak Samaj. In the evening of the same day, the same Maratha priests held a public worship attended by about a hundred and fifty Marathas. The first step, thus to free the non-Brahmins from the control of the priesthood was begun and Shahu as the king of Kolhapur joined it, blessing the movement and granting to it even monetary help. The Satya Shodhak Samaj, then on the support of the Maharaja established in July 1913, the Satya Shodhak School in Kolhapur.<sup>17</sup>

N. P. 251 To carry out the function of the Satya Shodhak Samaj a man of Dhangar caste - Visho<sup>x</sup>ji Done, a learned one was appointed as the head of the Satya Shodhak School of Kolhapur. The object was to teach the non-Brahmins all the religious formalities which the Hindus wish to observe in their religious ceremonies and which the non-Brahmins were hitherto declared to be unfit to conduct. And in a very short time, the young non-Brahmins from all over Maharashtra flocked to the school, to learn the art of priest craft. In 1913, out of the total religious ceremonies numbering 1513 which the

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16. Latthe, A.B., Op.cit., Vol. II, p. 377.

17. RGAK., for 1912-13, p. 46.

Brahmins were to perform, 266 marriages were performed by the Satya Shodhak priests.<sup>18</sup> The number was increased to 299 in 1914 and from various centres in Maharashtra like Poona and Ahmednagar, there were demands to Satya Shodhak priests.<sup>19</sup> The manner in which the Maharaja helped the movement was well described that -

"His Highness supported the movement directly by aiding the schools and indirectly by setting his face against persons who wished to discredit the movement by creating the impression that the marriages performed by the new priests were void."<sup>20</sup>

And during the Satya Shodhak movement in Kolhapur systematic efforts were made to liberate the non-Brahmins from the clutches of the Brahmin dominance of the priest craft.

Shahu Maharaja soon managed to grant a piece of land in the Gangaves, where today the office of the Kolhapur Satya Shodhak<sup>21</sup> is situated, for constructing building for the

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18. Omvedt, Gail, - Cultural Revolt in a Colonial Society (The non-Brahmin Movement in Western India: 1873 to 1930, p. 128.

19. Latthe, A.B., Op.cit., Vol. II, p. 381.

20. Ibid.

21. The late Bhaskarrao Jadhao, M.A., LL.B., the then Education Minister of the Bombay Presidency, was selected as the President of the Kolhapur Satya Shodhak Samaj. Prof. A.B. Latthe, Prof. M.G. Dongare and Haribhau<sup>Chavan</sup> were appointed respectively as Vice-President, the Chief Officer, the Secretary of the Samaj and Vithal Biraji Done, a servant at the Palace was freed to carry out the regular work of the Samaj.

Samaj office.<sup>22</sup> Then to provide with the religious needs of the non-Brahmins the Maharaja got composed a book "Gharacha Purohit" by the Satya Shodhakaitees. He also encouraged Shri Haribhau Chavan to compose books "Vastu Shanti, Purush Sukta, Sandhya, Shravani, Lagna Paddhati, Shraddha and Dashakriya."<sup>23</sup> Thus the Satya Shodhak Samaj was inspired into action by the Maharaja to free the masses from the Brahminical form of conservative life.

In Kolhapur, under the patronage of the Maharaja, the Satya Shodhak School was growing and students from all over Maharashtra were joining that school. In 1914, building was constructed at Gangaves for the Samaj and from 1915, common dinners - Sahabhajans - were started by the Samaj for all the people, belonging to different castes. However, basically there was difference between the Satya Shodhak Samaj ideology and the one that of the Maharaja. The Samaj wanted to stop the various forms of the worship, whereas the Maharaja wanted them in those days, as the non-Brahmins were not enough sensible to live without any worship. Besides the system of propaganda and the anti-religious stand that the Satya Shodhakaitees adopted were not acceptable to him. He helped the re-starting of the Samaj mostly because, he wanted to destroy the Brahminical dominance and to provide "an atmosphere

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22. RGAK, for 1912-1913, p.

23. Naik, T.B., Op.cit., p. 43.

of public and radical support for anti-caste reformism."<sup>24</sup> Naturally those who were doing that work and preaching reforms were held by him as dearest. An example would reveal his attitude. Once, the late Ganpatrao Dadaji More of the Pimpalgaon Basvant in Nasik district freed the God - Shri Ram - from the control of a Joshi of that town. There was a strife in that town between the Brahmins and non-Brahmins over that issue. By that time Shahu Maharaja was on tour to Nasik. He, therefore, instead of paying his tributes to Nasik Kala Ram, the famous temple, went to Pimpalgaon Baswant against the request of the District Superintendent of Police, Nasik and met More.<sup>25</sup> The British also, were aware of Shahu's support to the Satya Shodhakites but legally the Maharaja was not the member of the Satya Shodhak Samaj. Again, anti-god<sup>26</sup> and anti-worship<sup>27</sup> stand and movement of the Satya Shodhak Samaj was not desired by him as he was basically a devout Hindu.

#### ARYA SAMAJ

The Satya Shodhak Movement restarted on the support of Shahu Maharaja was spread almost in all parts of Maharashtra. Even in Kolhapur, it was carrying on its work of performing religious ceremonies. "The Maharaja's attitude towards the

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24. Omvedt, Gail. Op.cit., p. 129.

25. Kurane, Dattaji, Kai. Rajarshi Chh. Shri Shahu Maharaj Yanchya Athavani, p. 45.

26. Din Bandhu - Weekly, dated 8th June 1912, Bombay.

27. Ibid.

Samaj was one of benevolent neutrality."<sup>28</sup> Unless a good way of religious life is shown to the people, how can they give up the old way of life ? The Satya Shodhak had not that capacity and it was not a religion. Shahu, therefore, while describing his cold indifference to this Samaj told -

"The Brahmin Bureaucracy here has got so strong a religious and educational hold over the non-Brahmins that not even a few educated non-Brahmins have the strength of character to go against them. Indeed some of them are foolish enough to play into the hands of these social despots. Their religious hold over us does not allow us to break through despotism, because our ladies and elders are all wholly under their control. "Satya Samaj" cannot break the Brahmin despotism as it has not got any religious foundation, like the Vedas which the Arya Samaj has got."<sup>29</sup>

What actually Shahu wanted was the reconstruction of the Hindu society wherein will remain no distinctions between man and man. And not the Satya Samaj, but Arya Samaj according to him was to provide in this regard a religious way of reconstruction for all the Hindus, as it is based on the Vedas and permits all the Hindus, the right of the Vedas. The Maharaja

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28. Latthe, A.B., Op.cit., Vol. II, p. 460. See also - Omvedt, Gail, Op.cit., p. 128.

29. Latthe, A.B., Op.cit., pp. 460-61.

took the Vedic religion as some sort of a rational religion.<sup>30</sup>

Maharaja's support to the Satya Shodhak Samaj created troubles and plots against him. Arya Samaj was also not acceptable to the Brahmins. But to the Maharaja, it was a good instrument to activate the forces for social equality. However the Brahmin opposition indignant with him for many reasons, including that of religious one, threatened him to murder before February 20, 1918.<sup>31</sup> Even then consulting his friends like Col. Wodehouse, the Political Agent in Kolhapur, he got established by Pandit Atmaramji of Baroda, a branch of Arya Samaj in Kolhapur at the first floor of the New Maratha School on the 3rd February 1918.<sup>32</sup> The Arya Samaj permits the Vedokta rituals to all the Hindus irrespective of their low or high caste. This was good enough for Shahu and his Marathas, so far as their dispute with the Brahmins over the Vedokta was concerned. Moreover, Arya Samaj believed in abolishing the untouchability and wanted unity and integrity of all the Hindus. This was what exactly Shahu wanted.

His appeals to the Brahmins were not to root out the Brahmin caste but to reconstruct Hindu society on the basis of the Vedas granting social and religious equality to all Hindus. But the Brahmins of those days were not to come out

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30. Keer, Dhananjay, Shahu Chhatrapati, p. 302.

31. Ibid., p. 305.

32. RGAK, for 1917-1918, p. 46.

of their old fancies and religious garbs.

After the establishment of the Arya Samaj in Kolhapur, as it was dealing with the educational activities on a large scale, in 1919, the Rajaram College of the State was transferred by him to this Samaj.<sup>33</sup> Immediately again an Anglo-Vedic School was also placed at the disposal of the Samaj and an annual grant of Rs. 5000/- was sanctioned for this purpose. A Gurukul Boarding School for the Arya Samaj boys was also started at Kerle - between Kolhapur and Jotiba.<sup>34</sup>

Because of the generous attitude that the Maharaja had adopted towards the Arya Samaj, and his interest in the religious philosophy, induced the Arya Samaj<sup>n</sup> to invite him to preside over its Annual Conference at Navasari in Gujarath on 14th December 1918. There in his presidential address, while describing the pitfalls of the scriptures of Hinduism he told<sup>\*</sup> -

"The real nature of the Vedic religion was not clearly manifested owing to its being thickly entrusted. Ancient truths could not be clearly perceived as the works of the Rishis were studied with the help of the commentaries and expositions of the cunning and hypocritical priests (Bhatjees); false idol<sup>/</sup>try which degraded humanity

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33. Rajaramian : Golden Jubilee - 1931, p. 87.

34. Latthe, A.B., Op.cit., Vol. II, p. 461.



increased to a great extent. The worshippers of idols styled themselves holy. Brahminhood which used to depend on deeds and merits become dependent upon birth. Undue importance was given to sacred places. The local and nominal Brahmins could thereby secure plenty of rich food and plenty of money. Consequently they became idle and vicious and neglected education. In order to squeeze money in a number of ways, from the birth of a man to his death, they prepared books expounding vows (Vratas) and donations, nay, they prepared false books like Garud Puran prescribing ceremonies like Shradha, Mahalaya, Dan etc. to secure money even after death for unjust and luxurious maintenance of the so-called Brahmins upon the labour of the illiterate."<sup>35</sup>

Then in the course of his address, he attacked the Brahmins for their disinterest in learning and not permitting others to learn as -

"Learning in Brahmins began to disappear; and to keep up this source of profit for themselves and for their children, non-Brahmins also were kept back from learning. By increasing the science of Astrology, and creating the fear for stars, new methods of obtaining money were invented. Many superstitious ideas were forced upon

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35. Bhosale, S.S. (Ed.)-Krantisukte Rajarshi Chhatrapati Shahu, pp. 59-66.

society by setting aside good days from bad and by appointing days (Muhurtas) for travelling, marriage, thread ceremony and so on. The word of the priest became law, and hence the non-Brahmins who were taught to believe that religion and the way of securing the favour of God, and general welfare lay in obeying the priest (Bhatji), were reduced simply to the State of Nandi Bail (bullocks nodding to the will of his master)."<sup>36</sup>

Then he described the circumstances in which the Europeans came to India and the effect of their culture on Indian life. He held the British Rule as a boon, so far as its principle to give 'equal justice to all' and 'duty of Government to educate its subjects' were concerned. Reviewing then, the noble work that Swami Dayanand had done, and the difficulties the Brahmins created in his work, he felt a need to pay the Brahmins in their own coins just as the Satya Shodhak Samaj did. "In order to introduce true religious education and religion into the Deccan" he said of the Satya Shodhak Samaj that "they must prepare the ground well". In the Navasari speech or through all the speeches, we see Shahu Maharaja had stressed the need of religion to all the commoners. What he wanted was not the destruction of religion but equal rights

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36. Bhosale, S.S. (Ed.) Krantisukte Rajarshi Chhatrapati Shahu, pp. 59-66.

to all the Hindus in their religion. Hence in the same speech he continued —

"I quite admit that the Mohamedans, the Arya Samajists, and the Brahmins all have extremists among them. But Brahmins should have some rival extremists to unmask them and expose their religious brands and that is why I encourage Arya Samajists. Religious teachings of these sects are just like East and West. The Brahmin bureaucracy says that the priestly class alone, only by reason of their birth, should have all the power, religious as well as political, while the Arya Samajists say that any man qualified by his worth to wield such power should have that power. This the Brahmins, of course, don't like at all. So the Brahmin extremists and those of the Arya Samaj will never be one. I, for one do not like any extremist, but if a choice is to be made, would prefer an Arya Samaj extremist to Brahmin one."

In March 1920, at the third Arya Samaj Conference at Bhavnagar, in his presidential address he told<sup>x</sup> what he had done to help the Arya Samaj as —

"Gentlemen, I have adopted this faith as I know Vedic Dharma is superior to every other faith. I entrusted the Rajaram College, High School, Gurukul, Orphanage, Sirdar Boarding etc., to the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha with the

intention, getting them morally improved this possible through education. I have, therefore, given the charge of education into the hands of the Arya Samaj."<sup>37</sup>

Then he appealed to the people, who demanded social equality and equal status to all Hindus that -

"I have done whatever was possible for me ... I have done my duty. The future lies in your hands. If with all these efforts Vedic Dharma is not spread, the blame will lie upon you and Arya Pratinidhi Sabha."

Thus very strongly he wished people and Arya Samaj to spread up Vedic Dharma for equality, unity and progress of the Hindus.

#### THE BRAHMO AND PRARTHANA SAMAJ

It seems from the pages of earlier biographies, specially written by the late A.B. Latthe in two volumes in 1924, and the one written in Marathi by the late K.R. Pawar in 1929 that, Shahu was basically in search of such a religious way which would grant equality to all the Hindus and destroy domination of one caste or Brahmins over all the Hindus. It was his belief that "unless directly the Brahmins are attacked for their religious privileges, their domination would not be destroyed

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37. Bhosale, S.S. (Ed.) Krantisukte, p. 71.

and the dependence of the non-Brahmins would not come to an end.<sup>38</sup>

He tried, therefore, to go nearer to almost all the socio-religious movements of his times for his earnest desire of creating an egalitarian society. He was in contact with the late Maharshi Vithal Ramaji Shinde the Prarthana Samajist from 11th July 1897<sup>39</sup>, or even before that time. The Prarthana Samaj received his full attention. And as Latthe had told, "since 1911 or even a little earlier, Kolhapur had its Brahmos and His Highness had extended his catholic patronage to them to enable them to invite their great preacher from Poona and Bombay."<sup>40</sup> But he felt that "they were too iconoclastic and too ignorant of human sentiments to be an acceptable system of social life." Besides it recognises as he told, no religious book. And his need was to give a religion for the masses and not for few in the society.<sup>41</sup>

#### THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

In 1915, Shahu Maharaja came in contact with the Theosophical Society. But the atmosphere in Kolhapur and India as a whole in those days, was not healthy on account of the

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38. Bhosale, S.S. (Ed.)-Krintishkte, p. 62.

39. K.A.O., S.D.R., No. 6, Pudka No. 1, 1899 No. 1027.

40, Latthe, A.B.,-Op.cit., Vol. II, p. 490.

41. Ibid.

First World War and struggle for India's freedom. Annie Besant, the Theosophist had begun that time to take interest in Indian Politics and freedom movement. And under her Presidentship, a conference of the Marathi speaking people was to be held in Kolhapur. V.D. Tophakhane<sup>42</sup> was the member and President of the Welcome Committee of that conference. Due to Mrs. Besant's part in India's struggle for freedom, the British Government had a watch on her activities. The conference of the Theosophists in Kolhapur was an uninvited warrant to Kolhapur State. The Chief Police Officer of Kolhapur, Fernandes, therefore, was very much cautious of the conference<sup>43</sup>, for Tophakhane was the friend of the Maharaja and British Government was against Annie Besant. However, as Shahu Maharaja wanted to know the Theosophy movement and its ideology, all facilities were provided to Tophakhane. After reading a book of the Philosophy of Theosophy written by one Krishnaji (the) 'At The Feet of the Master'<sup>44</sup>, Maharaja's mind was inclined to Theosophy. He then encouraged the Theosophy movement to a great extent. Accordingly in 1915, Besant and her followers were invited to Kolhapur. Later on he visited also Adyar - Madras, the headquarters of

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42. Tophakhane, V.D. : An educationalist, famous Theosophist and founder of the Vidyapeeth High School in Kolhapur was a common friend of Shahu Maharaja and Lokmanya Tilak.

43. Tophakhane, V.D.: Rajarshi Shri Shahu Chhatrapati Yanche Antaranga, p. 34.

44. Ibid., p. 36.



the Theosophy. In 1920 he granted a piece of land to the Theosophical Society in Kolhapur.

But the Theosophists did not attract Shahu Maharaja. He was idol worshiper whereas in Theosophy there is no worship of any God. Even ~~at that time~~ <sup>when</sup> ~~controversies existed~~, the Maharaja had tried to adjust with the Theosophist movement, only to seek a noble principle helpful to remove faults among the Brahmins and non-Brahmins<sup>45</sup> and to unite Hindu society. Thus, the movements of Brahmo Samaj, Prarthana Samaj and the Theosophical Society failed to attract him and he came out as a strong supporter of the Arya Samaj as explained earlier.

#### THE BRAHMANETAR OR NON-BRAHMIN MOVEMENT

The Chaturvarnya system is the soul and base of Hinduism and reverence to a man in the ascendancy and contempt in the descendancy scale of caste system is its permanent feature. Social equality between the higher and lower castes of the Hindus was impossible. Kshatriyas, the non-Brahmins although formed the bulk of the Hindu society never received treatment of equality from the high caste or the Brahmins. Normally since the early days, the feud between the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas or the non-Brahmins had been witnessed in India throughout the ages. Sometimes it looked like that the feud was

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45. Tophakhane, V.D. : Rajarshi Shri Shahu Chhatrapati Yanche Antaranga, p. 57.

subsidized, specially under the Muslims. But it was misunderstanding of the problem. Because of that when the question arose of Shivaji Chhatrapati's right to Vedokta rituals, a wave of astonishment broke out in Maharashtra amongst the commoners of both the sections. Persons holding power and religious authorities from both the communities, in a way kept alive the feud in their minds and saw opportunities to trap the other party. Due to this, there remained no permanent unity among the Maharashtrians and they lost their Maratha kingdoms in Satara and Poona also.

After the advent of the British, all the castes among the Hindus were permitted to learning. The end of the Peshwa rule loosened the firm hold of the Brahmins over the non-Brahmins. The Brahmins, therefore, worried not for the end of Peshwa rule, but for their religious position among the Hindus. That was why Lokahitawadi (even after being a Brahmin, wrote of the general tendency of the Brahmins that if they get their bread and respect, easily they are prepared to serve any Government and people native or foreigners.<sup>46</sup> But in regard to their religious fellows the Brahmins had never showed love and affinity. On the other hand what the Marathas wanted in all the circumstances, as pointed out by Arthur Crawford was "governing not by the Brahmins."<sup>47</sup>

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46. Inamdar, N.R. (Ed.): Lokhitwadinchi Shatpatre, p. 180.

47. Crawford, Arthur: Our Troubles in Poona and the Deccan, p.76.



The social conditions in the time of Shahu's boyhood (his birth date 26.7.1874) were not congenial but congested. The anti-priest craft movement of the Satya Shodhak had created consciousness among the non-Brahmins for their united stand against the traditional privileged caste - the Brahmin. Against this Vishnu Shastri Chiplunkar retarded the growth of social cohesion and social progress in Maharashtra to drive a wedge between Brahmins and non-Brahmins.<sup>48</sup> Kolhapur would have been also affected by that tide although direct evidence is not traceable. A statement of Shahu made at the Navasari Arya Samaj Conference certainly helps us to know the impact of the Satya Shodhaks on Kolhapur and his early views also when we read "Since my boyhood it has been my pride and cherished object to overrule and break down the Brahmin priestly bureaucracy."<sup>49</sup>

The Vedokta affair then in Kolhapur again widened the rift between the Brahmins and non-Brahmins. Unfortunately during all the crisis between these two castes, no Brahmin of a repute and understanding of social change had tried for reconciling these two castes. Lokmanya Tilak, the Brahmin leader of the Indian level either not felt or neglected the need of cooperation and help of the non-Brahmins for the freedom struggle, and did make no efforts to pacify the feud between the two castes - the Brahmins and non-Brahmins. It was in fact, his honour in the capacity of a Brahmin and a national leader to

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48. Keer, Dhananjay, : Shahu Chhatrapati, p. 95.

49. Latthe, A.B., -Op.cit., Vol. II, p. 465.

take the lead in this matter. But he failed.

On Shahu's part as his stand was against the religious privileges of the Brahmins, no efforts in regard to reconciliation were to bear fruits. Even then we see that he had made appeals to both the communities<sup>50</sup>, the Marathas and the Brahmins to come together to cherish the goal of social justice and social equality. But as Keer has said, Tilak's policy divided Maharashtra into two camps - Brahmins and non-Brahmins."<sup>51</sup>

Because of the permanent feature of caste differences, the Brahmins and the non-Brahmins were making efforts to improve status of their own respective caste fellows. The Marathas under the patronage of Shahu Maharaja, became strong and rather aggressive to acquire means of progress. Consciousness among them of their tragedies gave new impetus to them to educate, organise and acquire more facilities to their community. In Poona also, like Laxmanrao Deorao Thosar, whose father was an associate of Mahatma Phuley, took lead to form the "Maratha Students Brotherhood" with a view that such an organisation would help the Maratha students providing them books and scholarships.<sup>52</sup> And the "Maratha Students' Brotherhood" was established on 26th February 1911. At its second Annual

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50. Jadhao, B.B., Op.cit., p. 4.

51. Keer, Dhananjay, Shahu Chhatrapati, p. 95.

52. Shinde, M.S., Vijayi Marathakar Shripatrao Shinde, p. 21.

Conference held at Poona, on 31st March 1912, in his presidential address Sir Tukojirao Maharaja Pawar of Dewas reverently ~~tributed~~ <sup>tributed</sup> to Shahu, saying —

"Simply the utterance of the name of Shri Shahu Chhatrapati is the real joy and happiness to true Marathas. He is the descendent of Shivaji Maharaja and is the leader of our community in true sense of the word 'leader'".<sup>53</sup>

The word Maratha used in the name of the "Maratha Students' Brotherhood" was not limited to the Marathas and included the non-Marathas also. Many times the words 'Maratha' and 'Backward class' were used frequently for one and the same name meaning.<sup>54</sup> The late Dr. P.C. Patil, <sup>b</sup>the then student in Poona, was the Chief convenor of this association and the President of the unofficial body - the 'Maratha Social Club', Poona.<sup>55</sup> In May 1912, Shahu Maharaja gave a handsome donation of Rs. 15,000 to this Maratha ~~students'~~ Brotherhood to meet expenses of meals of the students.<sup>56</sup> The members of this association in their later career including Dr. P.C. Patil, Laxmanrao Thosar, Baburao Jedhe, Baburao Jagtap, Advocate

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53. Din Bandhu, : Weekly Bombay - 6th April, 1912.

54. Shinde, M.S., : V.M. Shripatrao Shinde, p. 22.

55. Patil, P. C. : Mazya Athwani, p. 125-

56. Din Bandhu: 25th May, 1912.

Gopalrao Dajiba Naik, Govindrao Salavi, Raobahadur Thube, Ganapatrao Shinde, Shripatrao Shinde - the founder editor of the Vijayi Maratha newspaper, Vithalrao Karale, Keshavrao Dhere and many others had occupied very important posts in the public life of Poona and Maharashtra.

During all the days from Shahu's accession to power, till the end of 1910, various movements like the Shivaji Club, Vedokta affair and others had deliberately made attempts not only to attack and spoil Shahu's career, but poison also the social atmosphere in Kolhapur and Maharashtra. In 1908, an attempt was also made to kill Shahu Maharaja in a bomb explosion.<sup>57</sup> The extremists' activities, as well as of the Brahmins in Kolhapur had totally destroyed the peace. To increase the difficulties of the Maharaja, the Marathi Press also criticised him the manner it liked. In 1909, he, therefore, informed to the British Government that -

"Some newspapers upholding the spirit of casteism criticise me more than any other native prince. The Executive Engineer and Darbar Surgeon in my State belong to Backward classes and 'Rashtramat' paper has charged them false allegation, so that both of the officers had filed civil and criminal cases for recovering damage from them and all these papers are published from the British occupied regions."<sup>58</sup> In 1909, Jackson, the

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57. Naik, T.B., Op.cit., p. 66.

58. K.A.O., S.D.R., No. 19, 1909, Nos. 3571 to 3811, No.3571.

Collector of Nasik, who had earlier served as the Political Agent of Kolhapur, and supported Shahu's social thoughts<sup>7</sup> was murdered. It was as if, the activities of the Brahmins were concentrated either on the Maharaja or his supporters.

Against this situation, the newly educated non-Brahmins in Kolhapur and Maharashtra, were very much<sup>3</sup> suspicious about their place in the new-coming instalment of reforms from the British Government. Shahu knew the worries of the non-Brahmins and to make political awareness among the masses he got established at the assistance of A.B. Latthe, the Deccan Rayat Association at Nipani in 1916.<sup>59</sup>

Without granting some concessions to Indians it was not possible for the British to seek cooperation from them to fight the First World War. On August 20, 1917, the Secretary of State, Mr. Montagu, therefore, made an announcement of granting new political concessions to India. This had suddenly changed the socio-religious movement of the non-Brahmins into a political organisation. But they had at that time no such (an) organisation. The movements of the Satya Shodhak Samaj and Arya Samaj also were suiting themselves to the needs of the changed political situation. Specially the Satya Shodhakaites in Maharashtra thought<sup>7</sup> to join openly and directly politics without coining the word 'Brahmanetar Paksha' in a mint or 11x9 conference. The people in Maharashtra that time used the term

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59. Naik, T.B., Op.cit., p. 68.

commonly.<sup>60</sup> Most of the non-Brahmins thought of acquiring political rights from the British on the basis of communal representation. To have a systematic form to their demands and efforts, the first meeting was held at the Kirloskar Theatre Poona on 15th December 1917<sup>61</sup>, and the Maratha League was established. In 1918, Shripatrao Shinde, (to) whom Shahu Maharaja had helped for his education, was elected its General Secretary in 1918. Shinde and Baburao Jedhe of Poona made strenuous tours upto Hubali and Varhad<sup>62</sup> to propagate the new scheme of the political reforms and thereby to awaken the non-Brahmins for acquiring political rights from the British. All these efforts of the non-Brahmin intellectuals and leaders led them to form their own political party. As Shrimati Prema Kantak says men like Bhaskarrao Jadhao, Shripatrao Shinde, Baburao Jedhe, Annasaheb Latthe, Valchand Kothari and Keshavrao Bagade, were the leaders and directors of the movement (Brahmanetar) it grew indeed into the minds of the masses<sup>63</sup> - the non-Brahmins.

The late Valchand Kothari, an eminent journalist and grade one leader of the non-Brahmin movement, while describing his old reminiscences wrote in his paper the 'Prabhat' of

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60. Shinde, M.S., : V.M. Shripatrao Shinde, p. 25.

61. Ibid., p. 23.

62. Varhad means present Vidarbha.

63. Kantak, Prema : Satyagrahi Maharashtra, p. 219.

of Poona that before starting of his paper 'Jagruk'-vigilant - in July 1917, there was only the Satya Shodhak movement. It was then converted into political organ due to writings in 'Jagruk' and soon the Brahmanetar party was brought into existence. The first conference of the non-Brahmins in Bombay Presidency was held in April 1918 at Vijapur (now in Karnatak) under the presidentship of the late Advocate Gopalrao Naik. Latthe and Kothari played very important roles in that conference and impressed the audience very much.<sup>64</sup> Even Latthe had told that as a result of the Montagu announcement in British Parliament, the 'great movement'<sup>65</sup> took its birth in 1917 in the Madras and Bombay Presidency.

The Madras Presidency had also the similar problem of the Brahmin and non-Brahmin controversy. Snahu Maharaja had contacts with the leaders of non-Brahmins in Madras. He was very much pleased to see the reformatory work of the late Dr. T.M. Nair, the founder of the Justice Party established on 20th November 1913.<sup>66</sup>

From all corners, thus from the first time in Modern India the Brahmins saw challenge to their hereditary religious rights. And feeling uncertain of their future prospects,

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64. Kothari, V.R., (Ed.) Daily Prabhat, Poona dated 10th Dec. 1971.

65. Latthe, A.B., Op.cit., Vol. II, p. 561.

66. Shinde, M.S., V.M. Shripatrao Shinde, p. 74.

leaders like Tilak also opposed the reformative stand of Shahu Maharaja. But the movement was not to be stopped. Great workers like Bhaskarrao Jadhav, Shripatrao Shinde, Jedhe and others were created by him to whose work Mrs. Nalini Pandit has complimented saying that all these leaders did awaken politically the non-Brahmins through means of starting newspapers, arranging gatherings and conferences.<sup>67</sup>

Awakening among the non-Brahmins was unavoidable. The impact of the British Rule in India, difficulties of the British in the First World War and the announcement of the Montagu Chelmsford Reforms were certainly to attract all sections of Indian society. Even Muslims were quite alive to their separate interests. Marathas or non-Brahmins in Maharashtra and India were not to continue the old life of dumb and deaf. But leaders like Lokmanya could not understand the changing currents in the changing world. His Home League party established on 28th April, 1916, at Belgaum failed to absorb the aspirations of common people as its founder Lokmanya Tilak explained the Swaraj Scheme seemed to be favourable to Brahmin, as he said, "The essence of Swaraj is that we should manage our domestic affairs according to our wish."<sup>68</sup> That is why Shahu Maharaja said of the Home Rule in

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67. Pandit, Mrs. Nalini : Maharashtratil Rashtravadacha Itihas, p. 256.

68. Appadorai, A. : Documents on Political Thought in Modern India, Vol. I, p. 158.



1917 that "The so called Home Rule party is neither in touch with the masses nor have they sympathy for them. All they want is power for themselves. Their religious heads are already trying to organize their forces on the modern and revive what they call Chaturvarnya, the old four water-tight compartments of castes."<sup>69</sup>

It seems, however, Tilak, at the wrong days of his old age in September 1917, realised his mistake of anti-non-Brahmin stand. While writing in Kesari in his article "Swaraj, Brahmins and non-Brahmins"<sup>70</sup> for the first time in his life he showed desire to give attention to the demands of the non-Brahmins. This was too late for the reconciliation of the two groups, the Brahmins and non-Brahmins. Even then what Dhananjay Keer has pointed out in this regard was true that - "Tilak failed to see the non-Brahmin problem from the angle of social justice and equality, its basic urge for a social order in a changing social and economic life in India."<sup>71</sup> And for the change in Tilak's mind towards the problems of the non-Brahmins, Keer compared his role with that of Winston Churchill <sup>as</sup> "Tilak's attitude was like that of Winston Churchill who fought in World War II for democracy and freedom, but turned down India's demand for freedom, equality and justice."<sup>72</sup>

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69. B.C.P., Op.cit., p. 29.

70. Kesari, 8th September 1917.

71. Keer, Dhananjay, Shahu Chhatrapati, p. 285.

72. Ibid.

To Shahu and generally to all the non-Brahmins, the Montagu **A**nnouncement of August 1917 was a turning point in their religious struggle against the Brahmins. So far now all of them were mostly concerned <sup>X</sup>to religious rights and status, but they turned their eyes after the Montagu announcement in British Parliament towards the political rights and power. The whole course of their movement was turned from their religious demands to political demands. Everyone began, after that **A**nnouncement, to put his case before the Montagu Chelmsford Commission and plead for special rights and concessions. The Maratha Education Conference held at Khamgaon in Madhya Pradesh on 27th December 1917, was a golden opportunity to come together for the non-Brahmins<sup>X</sup> to have some common platform. No great leader of the stature, intellect and power or position of the Maharaja was there to lead the non-Brahmins in all the days<sup>X</sup> after Mahatma Phuley. His contributions again, for the diffusion of education and resurging<sup>X</sup> the modern life among the non-Brahmins, made him a<sup>X</sup> sole and incomparable leader of them. Even when he was busy preparing the case of the Indian Princes to put before the Montagu Chelmsford Commission, non-Brahmins made him the President of Khamgaon Conference. His presidential speech at that conference was, from various points of view - social, educational, religious and even of India's struggle for freedom - very important. At the outset he began "I come here not as Maharaja, but as a

common Maratha. You may call me a soldier or a peasant or anything you please"<sup>73</sup> and attracted minds of the commoners. Further he stated why he had love for lower and ignorant classes as -

"I feel proud to call myself a soldier, farmer and labourer. My forefathers were farmers before they became Kings. My mother, who belonged to the Ghorpade family of Mudhol and my adoptive mother who belonged to the Shirke family, and my adoptive father, who belonged to the Bhosale family, all of them came from farmer class. Many think and I too was advised not to mix with the lower and ignorant classes. But this advice fell flat upon my ears, as my love towards the labourers in whose family I was born, is also born with me. For the blood of a soldier and farmer is flowing through my veins. I like to mix with you."<sup>74</sup>

After explaining importance of education to the backward class people, he told the masses that without education no nation in the world had sought progress and no great diplomats and warriors, were produced. Turning then to the demand of Home Rule he said --

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73. a) Bhosale, S.S. : Krantisukte, p. 3.

b) Latthe, A.B. : Op.cit., Vol. II, p. 492.

74. Quoted from Latthe, A.B., Op.cit., Vol. II, p. 492.

"At present the great cry is about Home Rule. The question is whether we are fit for it. We do really wish to have Home Rule. It will give us what we may say, Life-Blood."

However, he suspected of ill-results of a Home Rule dominated by the Brahmins. So he said, to the audience -

"You will, I am sure, easily perceive that to do away with our internal dissensions and fit us for Home Rule, it is necessary that we must try our best to get rid of the evil of the caste system."<sup>75</sup>

After citing the example of Samurai's in Japan who took lead to reform and modernize their people, he wished the educated class in India - the Brahmins - to lead to reform and change masses according to changing times. But it is a tragedy that the Brahmins in his time never liked that idea and they became not only the enemies of Shahu, but also the enemies of new social change based on equality and modernity.

Rightly, therefore, Shahu Maharaja clarified his stand of the communal representation, as

"If castes remain as they are, Home Rule in the sense in which it is meant will result in nothing, but kind of

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75. Bhosale, S.S. (Ed.)-Krantisukte, p. 5.

oligarchy. This, of course, does not mean", he warned, "I may tell once more, that I am against Home Rule. Surely we want it. Under the present circumstances, however, we must have the protection and guidance of the British Government until the evil of caste system becomes ineffective. To prevent Home Rule from culminating into oligarchy, we must have communal representation at least for ten years. It will teach us what our rights are. Once we know them, communal representation can be dispensed with."<sup>76</sup>

His appeal, therefore, to the non-Brahmins for communal representation gave an invigoration for the Brahmanetar or non-Brahmin movement to fight for their political rights. This had really, as Latthe had said, created a New Chapter<sup>77</sup> in the Maharaja's life. As a result, Keshav Ganesh Bagade, B.A., LL.B., a Maratha, who was follower of Tilak and member of the Home Rule League, instead of continuing his association with Tilak's party, joined the Brahmanetar party.<sup>78</sup> Soon, the non-Brahmin leaders under the leadership of Shripatrao Shinde, the General Secretary of the All India Maratha League submitted a Memorandum to "The Parliamentary Select Joint Committee, appointed to consider the Indian Constitution Reforms Bill 1919" with the earnest demand of separate communal

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76. Bhosale, S.S. (Ed.)- Krantisukte, p. 7.

77. Latthe, A.B., Op.cit., Vol. II, p. 492.

78. Shinde, M.S., V.M. Shripatrao Shinde, p. 32.

representation to their caste.<sup>79</sup> The Brahmanetar newspapers 'Vijayi Maratha' started and edited by the late Shripatrao Shinde and 'Shiva Chhatrapati' started by Shri Bagade and Kirtivanrao Nimbalkar at Poona respectively from 19th January 1919 and in 1921, were the outcome of Shahu's inspiration to Brahmanetar movement.

After 1917, there was unprecedented speed and progress in the outlook and social thought of Shahu. Widow Remarriage Act, Abolition of Kulkarni Vatan, Enforcement of Talathi system, Abolition of Mahar Vatan, Abolition of Caste system from schools and many other Laws were passed in Kolhapur to enhance the movement towards social and political unity of all the people in his State. In the middle of all such hectic activities his beloved son Prince Shivaji died on June 10, 1919. During the same year Dr. Nair also died. The days seemed to him rather unfavourable but he did not yield to them and continued his mission of being a herald of social equality and justice.

The conferences Shahu attended as the President or a Chief Guest, at Hubli, Nasik, Nagpur and at other places after 1918 were, it seems, his direct efforts to create a second front out of his followers to fight for freedom on their own strength.

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79. Shinde, M.S. V.M. Shripatrao Shinde, p. 32.

He tried to maintain unity and integrity of the Brahmanetar movement. When Shripatrao Shinde the editor of Vijayi Maratha, and Mr. V.R. Kothari, the editor of 'Jagruk' had some misunderstandings against one another he proposed Mr. D.B. Ranadive, a common friend of them and a journalist and writer of high calibre, to bring reapproachment between them.<sup>80</sup>

While addressing the social conference held at Hubli, as the President of it, he said on July 27, 1920, that -

"Now-a-days, the feud between the Brahmins and non-Brahmins had just on the horizon. Newspapers are badly criticising me. Threats are given to me and my family members -- and if I fear and do not restrain my direct participation in the movement, they (the Brahmins) fear me to bear consequences as they made to bear to Jackson, Rand and Mr. Jadhavrao".<sup>81</sup>

Progress of the non-Brahmins was looked through the glasses of hatred and animosity. Because of this on the eve of the Hubli conference of the non-Brahmins, Hubli Bazar was inflamed and idol of Shri Nandi was broken. Pointing out this matter in his speech and after describing the hardships that

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80. Letter of Shahu to D.B. Ranadive dated 17th April 1919. The letter is with Mr. T.D. Ranadive of Kagal, the son of late D.B. Ranadive.

81. Bhosale, S.S., Krantisukte, pp. 27-28.

the non-Brahmins received at the hands of the Brahmins, the efforts of the late Pratapsinh Chhatrapati of Satara to learn when he was prohibited by the Peshwas, so also the cruel deeds that the Brahmins did in the name of religion to harass the non-Brahmins and the Shudras, he turned to basic question, "What should be done by the non-Brahmins"? He then advised -

"How to conduct the Brahmanetar movement successfully we should learn from Madras. For this purpose we will invite Madras speakers to Maharashtra, we will inform of the work they have done in Madras, to the people of Poona and Bombay, arrange conferences of the Brahmanetars at Poona, Bombay and at other places...

"Dear Brothers, unite yourselves, make sincere and honest efforts and be free out of the slavery of intellectuals. Do whatever you want, even die, for liberty. But gain freedom from those who treat you like the beasts. Get solved all your minor or major differences -- Do that much or behave like the manner God wishes" (As all are children of God). Don't do injustice to anybody. With the help of magnetic <sup>iron</sup> of the non-Brahmins of Madras let us become of gold."82

Turning towards the Montagu Chelmsford Commission, he said in his concluding speech --

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82. Bhosale, S.S., Krantisukte, p. 29.



"At the Maratha Education Conference, held at Khamgaon, I have demanded concession of communal representation for ten years only. If we don't get them, don't be nervous. The grant of communal representation, we don't want now. We will first deserve and then desire."<sup>83</sup>

He did not forget <sup>to</sup> but to remind the non-Brahmins to select their qualified honest as well as true leaders<sup>84</sup> in the council elections which were to take place in 1920. To counteract the All India Maratha League and Shahu Maharaja, Lokmanya Tilak arranged the establishment of the Maratha Rashtriya Sangh on 26th October 1917 at Poona.<sup>85</sup> Maharshi Annasaheb alias Vitthal Ramji Shinde was one of the prominent figures in that Sangh and he contested also Council election in 1920 on General Seats and got defeated although he was backed by the Brahmins, and upheld by Vijayi Maratha of Shripatrao Shinde.<sup>86</sup> But as Annasaheb Shinde himself realised very much the conservative and anti-social thoughts of Lokmanya <sup>and</sup> cut off his association with the Maratha Rashtriya Sangh after elections.<sup>87</sup>

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83. Bhosale, S.S.: Krantisukte, p. 29.

84. Naik, T.B. : Op.cit., p. 71.

85. Shinde, M.S. : Op.cit., p. 24.

86. Shinde, V.R. : Mazya Athavani, p. 310.

87. Shinde, M.S. : Op.cit., p. 24.

The Brahmanetar Movement had <sup>been</sup> spread <sup>up</sup> mostly in the Deccan, the whole of South India. Except the Brahmins, the traders, landlords, money lenders, non-Brahmin bureaucrats and all others - were the followers of this movement. It was based on the pattern of the Justice Party of Madras. On many occasions, Shahu Maharaja had advised his followers - the Marathas and others to seek their unity and progress as the non-Brahmins in Madras did.<sup>88</sup> The real struggle of the movement was to get justice to their cause of upliftment. The non-Brahmin movement in Madras was naturally called the justice party. In Maharashtra, the "Brahmanetar Paksha" was the popular name of this movement.

#### THE OBJECTS OF THE MOVEMENT

The objects of the non-Brahmin movement were to seek rights for equal opportunities in social, religious, educational and political life of our country. The first three they were to seek from the Brahmins. Because, Brahmins were the religious heads and preceptors, so <sup>also</sup> learned and teachers. Unless these three rights were secured, Shahu Maharaja was not confident of the masses to be qualified to seek political rights and freedom. The ignorant masses were not knowing to what freedom was called and why they needed it. In such an atmosphere, what they badly needed was a lesson to make

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88. Bhosale, S.S. : Krantisukte, p. 28.

89. Shinde, M.S. : V.M. Shripatrao Shinde, p. 73.

them aware of the importance they had in conducting the affairs of the State and the very existence of human beings on earth. At this juncture what the Maharaja had felt had been correctly put by Justice Vaidya (as) -

"... that the domination of the priestly class in the bureaucracy and the barriers set up by religion between man and man must go and liberty, equality and fraternity should be established among the people, if the people of India desired to march with time."<sup>90</sup>

This was what the masses liked more than anything. Instead of joining the National Congress, dominated by reactionary and extremist leaders like Lokmanya Tilak, they voluntarily joined the Bramhanetar movement. From all corners of the Deccan, there was immense support and positive response from the masses. The conferences held (of this movement) at various places like Madras, Hubli, Amraoti, Kanpur, Nasik and Vijapur and at other places certainly show its popularity and need.

On the eve of the introduction of the Montagu Chelmsford Reforms in India, the Maharaja sent on behalf of the All India Maratha League, Bhaskarrao Jadhao to England for presenting the demands of separate electorates to the

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90. Vaidya, Justice G.N. : Shahu Chhatrapati : A Ruler and Revolutionary, p. 59.

Marathas before the British parliament. But instead of separate electorates, only 7 seats were kept reserved for the Marathas and others equal to them.<sup>91</sup>

For all the times, after the beginning of the Brahmanetar movement and (Paksha) party Shahu Maharaja was much worried to get more concessions and rights to the non-Brahmins in the British region. Every opportunity he met with the occasion was spent by him to make the cause of the mass upliftment as the public issue. He sent, therefore, Bhaskarrao Jadhao and A.B. Latthe to see Mahatma Gandhi at Belgaum, while he was on tour to Belgaum and tried to convince him of the need of uplifting the Brahmanetar people. Lokmanya Tilak had also described the term as --

Brahmanetar means all the people other than the Brahmins which include Sayajirao Gaikwad, Shinde of Gwalior, Rajputs, Kings, Bhatas and Marwadis, Vaishyas, farmers, Malis, Potters, weavers, untouchables, Jains, Lingayats and such others.<sup>92</sup>

Thus Brahmanetar Party was based on broad views and vast communities. Although this movement was started in a native State like Kolhapur, its activities were spread in British India also. After the Vijapur conference wherein T.M. Nair

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91. Shinde, M.S. : Op.cit., p. 24.

92. Tilak, Lokmanya : L. Tilakanche Kesaritil Lekha, Vol. III Political p. 452.

was the chief guest, the first All India Conference of this party was held at Hubli under the Presidentship of Tyagraj Chetty. On the pattern of the All India Congress, the Brahmanetar party had also <sup>2</sup>with its Annual Conference, a separate Social Conference to discuss social problems. At the time of Hubli Brahmanetar Conference, Shahu Maharaja adorned the Presidentship of this social conference and appealed the non-Brahmins to maintain their united front and seek justice in all fields of life. On 26th December 1922, after the death of the Maharaja, the Brahmanetar party Conference of the Madras Presidency was held at Madras under the Presidentship<sup>93</sup> of A.B. Latthe. And at the Satara Conference of 1924 Dhanik Chelim Chetti was the President. Both Madras and Bombay were united to dominate the whole of South India with the thought, first of the social justice and then political freedom. Shahu Maharaja and T.M. Nair and their followers in Bombay and Madras Presidency were fully convinced to have first social reforms and then political justice. In case of Shahu, there was no question of seeking the leadership as he was the Chhatrapati. It was, thus, the movement of the masses, required and conducted under his guidance by the masses.

T.M. Nair, while in England on his mission to seek separate electorate for the non-Brahmins, died on 17th July 1919.

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93. Shinde, M.S. : V.M. Shripatrao Shinde, p. 74.

to which Shahu Maharaja felt a great loss to non-Brahmins and India. In his memory he started at Kolhapur a merit scholarship for non-Brahmin students.

In the time of Montagu Chelmsford Commission, the first and foremost problem discussed everywhere was "Whether social reforms should precede political reforms or vice versa". At the time of laying foundation stone of the Maratha Boarding at Nasik on the 15th April 1920, Shahu Maharaja had reviewed the situation in India since the time of his accession to power and said in his presidential address that -

"One can never succeed in adequately praising the efforts of those who come forward with full moral courage and with the true spirit of Satyagriha to practice the elementary principles preached by the Satya Shodhak Samaj that all people as the children of God are kith and kin ..."<sup>94</sup>

Further turning to the dispute on the issue of social and political reforms he said -

"Whether political reform should precede social reform is a dispute which is attended with more heat than light. The two are as closely connected as the wheels of a carriage. That you can never succeed in driving a carriage

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94. B.C.B. : A Royal Philosopher Speaks, pp.43-44.

safely if it rests on the wheel only, is a common sense  
 of fact. Those who plead for political reform only and  
 pay no heed to social reform or deny its urgency give  
 sufficient reason to doubt their motives. It would not  
 be a miss to call them crafty and cunning."<sup>95</sup>

To safeguard the interests of the non-Brahmins he wanted  
 to get himself elected to the Viceroy's Council in accordance  
 with the provisions of the Montagu Reforms. But as he was the  
 King of a Native State he was not permitted by the British.  
 The year then 1921, was seen by the Kolhapur people, again for  
 extending new reforms like the Abolition of the Vet- Virala  
 forced labour and others. In all such busy hours he found  
 time to write Dr. Ambedkar, who was that time in England for  
 his studies, about the non-Brahmin movement. In reply to his  
 one of the letters Dr. Ambedkar had written about his own  
 efforts in England to plead the case of the non-Brahmins and  
 told -

"I have to some extent at least disillusioned Montagu  
 as regards the position of the moderates in India. It is  
 probably that he will still take clue from them but I am  
 certain that he will not speak so dispassioningly of the  
 non-Brahmin movement which he, in fact, none here, cared to  
 understand. It is regretted that no good exponent of the

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95. B.C.B. : A Royal Philosopher Speaks, p. 51.

N.B.<sup>96</sup> movement was present during the critical period when the Reform Bill was on the anvil. Consequently it became quite an easy task for the enemies of the movement to represent it as only anti-Brahminism. Its democratic side was ingeniously suppressed."<sup>96A</sup>

In the tense of the Brahmin and non-Brahmin dispute over social, religious and political rights to the non-Brahmins, Shahu and his followers were criticised by almost all newspapers in Maharashtra. The non-Brahmin newspaper, started on his help or blessings like the Jagruk, Vijayi Maratha, the Deccan Rayat, Bhagava Zenda and others were also on their strength trying their level best to retort the criticism levelled against the Maharaja and them. Already efforts were made by some Brahmin leaders to bring a rift within the non-Brahmins and efforts were made to convince Shahu to restrain from the movement. And after his refusal, conspiracies were made to defame first and then detach him from the non-Brahmins. On October 3, 1920, the Shivaji Society of Poona held its annual meeting in Bhavani Peth under the Presidentship of Shahu Maharaja as he was its President. The followers of Lokmanya Tilak who wanted to take revenge on Shahu, plotted to disrupt the meeting and defame and lower Shahu Maharaja. As the meeting began, the mischievous Brahmins

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96. N.B. = Non-Brahmins.

96A. K.A.O., S.D.R., R-12811 15 dated 3rd Feb., 1921.



rushed to dias and beat audience, and immediately complained to the Police also as it was the British region that the Maharaja and his party had beaten <sup>up</sup> them severely. Nothing had come out of this case<sup>97</sup> but the true nature of Tilak's followers was witnessed to widen the gap between the Brahmins and non-Brahmins.

Shahu Maharaja thus, made the people among the non-Brahmins including Dr. Ambedkar to stand <sup>up</sup> by the plans of their progress and prospects. As Justice Vaidya rightly remarked, the Maharaja "was a sincere hero as he had a superior insight into the past present and future of the lot of the common people of this country whose history is yet to be written."<sup>98</sup> And to carry out the mission of protecting the interests of the non-Brahmins he created and ~~grew~~ great leaders among them like Bhaskarrao Jadhao, Keshavrao Jedhe, A.B. Latthe, Shripatrao Shinde, Karmaveer Bhaurao Patil and others. Naturally the death of Shahu Maharaja did not stop the non-Brahmin movement in Maharashtra. In fact, lamps of learning were lit and dumb and deaf masses were awakened by him. The movement, therefore, of the idea of public welfare grew after him and will grow also in future to its fullest growth.

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97. Latthe, A.B. : Op.cit., Vol. II, pp. 583-584.

98. Vaidya, Justice G.N., - Shahu Chhatrapati, p. 51.

THE PROBLEM OF UNTOUCHABILITY

"The work of social reform cannot be an act of a State.

It is chiefly valuable when it is the work of the people."<sup>99</sup>  
 said M.G. Ranade, at the Eighth Social Conference held at Madras in 1894. This was the first year of Shahu as the Chhatrapati of Kolhapur. Before that the age of Consent Bill, from 1891 had stirred the social and political atmosphere in Maharashtra. Lokmanya Tilak and his colleague, G.S. Khaparde, had launched a campaign against this Bill. Khaparde opined also that -

"...such reforms should spring from the people, and should not be forced on them; for this appearance of force disinclined people to all reform, and this made matters worse."<sup>100</sup>

Thus, reformers as well as politicians from the upper caste of the Hindus did not think fit of State's initiative into the introduction of social reforms. Ironically it was the tragedy of their thoughts and of the reformers belonging to them that no reformer from their caste came forward to serve the purpose of the upliftment of masses. No body among them turned his eyes towards the miseries of untouchables. Every day they had contacted with them, but no one became from them

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99. Appadorai, A. : Documents on Political Thought in Modern India, Vol. I, p. 122.

100. Ibid., Vol. I, p. 127.

a saviour or benefactor of the untouchables.

To Shahu Maharaja it was not necessary while adorning and enjoying the crownship of Kolhapur to look upon such questions as the hardships of the untouchables. One can understand his services in the upliftment of the Marathas, but why should he turn to the untouchables ? He was not a commoner to know the difficulties of a man belonging to the untouchable caste. So also he was not born in the house of a reformer to carry out the work of universal brotherhood and do something to solve the problem of the untouchables. In spite of this fact, Shahu, at the first year of his royal career in 1894, removed the system of Vetha Bigar<sup>101</sup>, the one in which there is forced labour but no wages.

Whether Shahu Maharaja had thought of social equality from the beginning of his royal career or not, had no direct evidence. But his statement at the Arya Samaj Conference of 1918, makes us aware that from his boyhood he hated the superiority and supremacy of one caste over another.<sup>102</sup> His work, therefore, in removing the hardships of the untouchables, must be taken up as spontaneous and humanitarian one. Before him, in Kolhapur there were separate schools for low caste students. But the number of the untouchable students remained negligible. To give impetus and encouragement to the educational

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101. Pawar, K.R. : Bhagawan S.S. C.M.Y. Awatar, p. 62.

102. Latthe, A.B. : Op.cit., Vol. II, p. 463.

progress of the untouchables, in 1897 he opened with his <sup>103</sup> hands the first Mahar School at Alta.

From his young days Shahu stressed the principle of 'self-help'.<sup>104</sup> In view of this principle the progress of the untouchables was not possible unless they were made free from the clutches of the religious slavery of the caste Hindus. In this regard the British Government in India, and the Christian Missionaries had played an unprecedented role of benefactors to them. The work of Mahatma Phuley was also pioneering one so far as such work of an indigenous reformer was concerned. But after Mahatma Phuley's death, the movement to treat untouchables like men and equals was stopped. No reformer from the caste Hindu turned his eyes upon the shackles of slavery that the untouchables were tied in. Shahu was also at the beginning, as he himself told, not looking upon them through the relationship of brotherhood.<sup>105</sup> But it seems that after coming from England, a revolutionary change was seen in his attitude.

Education to the untouchables was equally very important question. There were in all 4 schools and total 168 low caste students in 1894-95<sup>106</sup>, and due to their poverty the majority

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103. RGAK, for 1896-97, p. 135.

104. B.C.B. (Ed.) : Op.cit., p. 3.

105. Jadhao, B.B.-Op.cit., p. 87.

106. RGAK for 1894-95, p. 136.

children of the untouchables did not turn to schools. Moreover, the caste system had made them slave, to carry out without wages any work in the villages or wherever they were living. The untouchable children when were seen by the caste Hindus growing in age, were forced to carry out any work in the villages. For reasons, more than these, they needed also encouragement and asylum to start with A.B.C. Understanding their hardships, on his initiative, the first Aantyaaja Boarding in Kolhapur was established in 1907,<sup>107</sup> and after receiving help from Miss Clarke, the daughter of the Bombay Governor of that time, the Boarding was renamed in her memory as the Miss Clarke Hostel in 1908.<sup>108</sup>

Besides helping to the Miss Clarke Hostel, Shahu made efforts to raise the social status of the untouchables through some special measures. To draw them from their abject condition in the Hindu Society, he employed them giving suitable and honourable posts and opened new avenues of new life. "For lack of educated men among them, he had to content himself with their use in his household service. He began by making them his coachmen. They were thus placed on the coach-boxes of state carriage on all occasions even during his daughter's marriage, so that they were publicly treated as touchables. The elephant is a royal animal in India and it is considered a privilege to serve as an elephant driver.

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107. RGAK for 1907-1908, p. 35.

108. Ibid.

His Highness employed some of them in this popularly exalted position. The right to have swords in their belts on public ceremonial occasions, was a badge of Kshatriyaship which was denied to them by popular belief. His Highness gave some of them these swords of honour and allowed them to appear in State functions like the soldiers and Sardars of the warrior class. This process of habituating the people to the elevation of the Untouchables to new and honoured position went on for some years."<sup>109</sup>

To attract attention of the public for practising non-observance of untouchability, the Maharaja got his clothes stitched specially of the royal members from an untouchable tailor like Ganpatrao Pawar and Laxman Master to whom he had given suing machines.<sup>110</sup> In his stable also a large number of Mahars were recruited as regular servants.

One day at noon while at launch, one Gangaram Kamble felt very thirsty and rushed with a bucket in hand to a tap to fetch water. The caste Hindus working with him thought the action of Gangaram as of pollution and beat him severely. To save from their wrath, Gangaram ran to the Maharaja. There, the Maharaja not only beat the offenders by his hunter, but ordered also through an ordinance for permitting the untouchables to use water taps, in the Government camp.

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109. Latthe, A.B., Op.cit., Vol. II, p. 488.

110. Naik, T.B., Op.cit., p. 57.

Gangaram was then made free from service and the Maharaja asked him to start an independent life by starting a Tea stall, where His Highness the Chhatrapati of Kolhapur used to take, regularly tea,<sup>111</sup> while on his way from the New Palace to Old Palace.

Efforts were made by him also to change the surnames of the untouchables and the low caste people. To Mahar wrestlers, he named as 'Jat Wrestlers' to Chamar - Sardar, to Scavengers - Pandit<sup>112</sup> to Matang - Ganeshachari and surnames like <sup>a</sup>Silekar, Sarnaik, Shirke and others were given to them.

The Mahars were the hereditary Police-servants of the village. The village servants like the priest, the Smith, the Lohars, Kumbhars and others, Mahars were entitled to rent-free Watan lands. But as the lands assigned to them were very small, they had to remain alive on the Balute system. As all other Balutedars were to supply some useful articles to villagers their share of Baluta was sure and enough, but as the Mahars were only Police and were to supply nothing, they were the worst sufferers of that system. Knowing fully of this account, the Mahars were first excluded by the Maharaja from the Abolition of Watan Order of 22nd February 1918.<sup>113</sup> On June 25, 1918, this order was amplified by an express declaration from

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111. Salunkhe, P.B. : Shahu Gaurav Granth, pp. 504-505.

112. Naik, T.B. : Op.cit., p. 57.

113. K.S.G. Part-I, dated 22nd February, 1918.

the Maharaja to the effect that the rayats had no right to impose their services on Mahars and that the rent free lands - Watans they held, may be treated as rayatawa or assessed lands.<sup>114</sup>

It was necessary for the Mahars, Mangs, Ramoshis etc. to follow the system of daily roll-call or Hajeri at Chavadi as they were treated as criminal tribes. By an order of August 31, 1918 the Hajeri system was stopped to free them from the traditional slavery. Many of them actually involved in the criminal offences were again permitted on self-security to free themselves after attending regularly for five years and proving good conduct. Further, a strong step was taken on March 3, 1919 by promulgating a fine upto Rs. 100 or imprisonment upto four days as a punishment to those who were attempting to outcaste such people who employed men other than new defunct Balutedars.<sup>115</sup> And on March 28, of the same year, the final step was taken by an order that the rayats need not pay the Mahars any Baluta as they were from this date made free from liability to compulsory service.<sup>117</sup>

In regard to the problems of untouchables and untouchability, the year 1916 seems to be a turning point in the policy of Shahu Maharaja. As Latthe had pointed out this may also be

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114. K.S.G. Part-I, dated 25th June, 1918.

115. K.S.G. Part-I, dated 3rd March, 1919.

117. K.S.G. Part-I, dated 28th March, 1919.



true in regard to matters relating to his connections with the Theosophical society, Arya Samaj and others. But it was in that year, the first State Order to exempt the Mahars from the Local Fund taxes was issued on May 9, 1916.<sup>118</sup> Onward this time, the beneficial outlook of Shahu Maharaja about the untouchables had gone throughout his career in the ascending scale of progress.

The problem of removing untouchability is ever remained \* as the greatest one which India failed to solve from the ancient times. To Shahu also, this was a matter of great worry. The land which had rejected the social philosophy of the Buddha and Mahavira was very much difficult to bring to senses of social equality and humanitarian outlook. Many great men and social reformers as well as saints were born in India, but they were never followed honestly by their followers. Against this background Shahu Maharaja had no alternative without using his State power to enhance reforms and social change in Kolhapur. A great hue and cry was naturally expected against him from the reactionaries or the Brahmins.

Accordingly various administrative measures were adopted with the object of removing untouchability. "The first step in that regard was to appoint men of the untouchable classes as Talathis, village ministers who were hitherto members of the heaven-born Brahmin community."<sup>119</sup> This was a sudden change in

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118. K.S.G. Part-I, 128 dated May 13, 1916.

119. Latthe, A.B., Op.cit., Vol. II, p. 498.

the life of a community whoever stood outside of the village Chavadi. In February 1919, some of them were promoted to become, for the first time in their life, clerks in the State offices.<sup>120</sup>

On 15th January 1919, an order was issued to the State Education Department asking it to treat the depressed class students on a similar footing of perfect equality with others. But due to mischief of some officials in the Huzur office, the order was misplaced. The second order was immediately issued in the month of August with the same contents of the order of January 1919 as —

"It has come to the notice of the Huzur that even in our Educational Bodies, the Touchables and the Untouchables are treated differently and are not allowed to approach the school precincts ~~w~~within the compound of the Educational Institutions. The State quarters of the Educational Bodies are not given to them as their private property, and so they have no right whatever to treat the so-called untouchable human beings so defiantly, but they are expected to give them every consideration. Institutions like Educational Bodies are meant for poor people and even the poorest <sup>un</sup>touchable human being has right to be treated on a footing of

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120. Latthe, A.B., Op.cit., Vol. II, p. 500.

equality. They pay the taxes why then should they be ill treated ? The Huzur earnestly hopes that the Educational Private and State Bodies who receive Grant-in-aid or other help like buildings, play grounds etc. should treat untouchables with great respect and kindness than Touchables, because Touchables can make their way in education any how while Untouchables are hopelessly helpless."

"Most certainly every one from the Principal to the lowest Master will be taken to task and any help given to private bodies will be taken back if the Untouchables are not given equal treatment."<sup>121</sup>

Further in the same Notification, the Maharaja advised the Educational ~~bodies~~ that --

"Any Untouchable student joining any State-aided or helped Educational Institution should be treated respectfully like a gentleman and taken into School rooms. If any man on the State Educational staff has any objection to his doing so, he must send his resignation within six weeks from the receipt of this order; he will of course, be entitled to no pension. If the helped or aided Educational Bodies have any objection, of course the Darbar will have to stop the grant-in-aid or help which

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121. K.S.G. Part-IV, dated 23rd August, 1919, p. 46.

they are receiving. Playgrounds, houses and other moveable and immoveable property, which has been given to them by the State will be heavily taxed. If any private Educational Body goes against the wish of the donor, it will be taxed upto 7% on movable and immovable property of the donation or a scholarship will be kept according to the wish of the donor or his heirs. Any school-master, however over worked he may be expected to help the untouchable students when they come to school."

Thus every loophole of the order was checked and Rao Bahadur Dongare<sup>122</sup>, a Satya Shodhakaite was assigned the special duty to furnish the copy of this notification to all the concerned.

Then on the same date in August 1919, another Notification was published to ask the charitable Hospitals and Medical Institutions in the Kolhapur state for observing no untouchability and treat the untouchables on equal footing with others. And any officer, dresser or nurse who objected to this order was asked to resign his or her post.<sup>123</sup> The Heads of all State Departments were directed to treat untouchable clerks or people without any distinction of touchability. In 1920, Shahu Maharaja granted special representation to untouchables in the Kolhapur Municipality and a young man of the Chamar

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122. K.S.G., Part-IV p. 47 dated 23rd August 1919.

123. Ibid., Part-IV, p. 47 dated 23rd August, 1919.

community, D.S. Pawar who became in his later life an associate of B.R. Ambedkar was made the Chairman of Standing Committee of the Kolhapur Municipality. Mahars, as they were fighters, were granted permission to wear a sword at their waists.<sup>124</sup>

"Among the other measures, adopted by him" as Latthe had mentioned, were<sup>125</sup> (1) the abolition of untouchability on water-pipes, tanks, wells, in Dharmashalas, Hospitals, Schools and other public places, (2) Free Boarding Houses for them were opened at Sontali and the Station Bungalow, (3) Separate schools for the untouchables were abolished and, (4) The enactments of making arrangement to punish a person of anti-Baluta system were introduced, (5) System of giving rollcall (Hajeri) every day was stopped, (6) Special representation in the Municipalities were granted and thus helped the cause of removing the evils of untouchability. In addition to all such efforts, Sanads were also granted to qualified downtrodden people to plead at the various courts in the State. One Ganeshachari - a leader belonging to Matang community - became after Shahu's death very famous as an advocate.

Because of such activities of Shahu, specially to treat the untouchables as equals and granting them posts like clerks, educational facilities and sanads to plead in the law courts, created a havoc in the Brahminical circles and those who followed the Brahmins. To explain his stand and to reply to

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124. Naik, T.B., : Op.cit., p. 57.

125. Latthe, A.B., Op.cit., Vol. II, p. 500.

his opponents Shahu said at the dinner party arranged in honour of the Bombay Governor Sir George and Lady Lloyd on 30th July 1919, that --

"I have been trying to do to improve the lot of labouring and other backward classes that it has brought prominently in view. My principle has been to take care of the weak among the subjects more than that of the strong. Their condition has from the first appealed to me personally and it has been one aim of my administration to do level best, to cure the evil. With this end in view I have been labouring and for the last twenty-five years I have been offering them special facilities to learn."<sup>126</sup>

Really, from earliest times to the days of Dr. Ambedkar's rise, there was no leader <sup>Y</sup>to the untouchables. When the Maharaja heard of B.R. Ambedkar's return to India securing the highest degrees like Ph.D. from America he became more jubilant than any other man in India. Immediately then on his own taking the help of D.S. Pawar<sup>127</sup>, he went to Bombay and met Ambedkar and got himself introduced. Soon he arranged the first Conference of the untouchables under the presidency of Ambedkar at Mangaon in his State on 21st and 22nd

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126. B.C.B., A Royal Philosopher Speaks, p. 35.

127. Khairmode, C.B. : Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, Vol. I. Sd. Ed. p. 288.

March 1920. Speaking in that conference as the Chief Guest the true lover of humanity, the Maharaja said --

"Some say, what connection is there between politics and untouchability and if there is any they try to promise to remove it. But I ask how will politics fare well, unless the untouchables be treated like human beings ? Those who take part in politics must treat men as men, that is, as they are treated in other countries. The country will not be otherwise well served. He will be said to have served his country who does so, and none else."<sup>128</sup>

Then explaining his attempt to end the system of Hajeri - Roll call - he further said --

"I should like to take this opportunity to say why I freed the so-called untouchables from Hajeri. This practice of Hajeri gave scope to village officers and others to oppress these people, for example, officers threatened and forced them to work gratis even when the rate of wages was twelve annas per day. At the most, they should give them at least bare subsistence and nothing more."

"This is the heinous form of slavery that we have imposed

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128. Jadhao, B.B. (Ed.) : Rajarshi Shri Shahu M. Bhashane, p.62.

in this twentieth century. The practice of Hajeri sometimes prevented them from seeing their sick relations with the consequence that several died without their being seen by their relatives. I have myself seen examples of parents being taken away to do forced labour in time and out of time, and thus becoming unable to attend their sick children whom they found dead on their return home. What tyranny could be more tyrannical than this ? There are likewise, no few occasions when Balutedars are made to work for the higher class people and refused wages. In case anybody complains he is threatened to be included in the Hajeri list."

He concluded his speech with a strong hope that the untouchables would certainly select a leader to them from amongst themselves and not from other castes. Similarly he wished strongly Ambedkar's becoming the leader of the untouchables and the masses of India. And in the huge crowd, openly he gave Ambedkar an invitation to have dinner with him - the Maharaja.

Shahu Maharaja looked upon Ambedkar as the first man among the non-Brahmins who proved that the acquisition of knowledge cannot be the monopoly of a man belonged<sup>x</sup> to a particular caste. Because of his example not only the untouchables but all the people other than the Brahmins and even the Brahmins who regarded learning a most



difficult task, turned to think the field conquerable and possible for any man. But all the towering degrees that Ambedkar brought from the foreign countries could not solve his economic problems. He wanted to go the way Shahu proposed to him to serve his people and wanted money to start a newspaper at the beginning of his career. None else, but Shahu Maharaja helped him in his maiden activity to start the newspaper 'Muka Naik' paying handsome donation of Rs. 2,000/-.<sup>129</sup>

This was the high time of the Montagu Chelmsford Reforms. Vitthal Ramji Shinde alias Annasaheb Shinde and others were not of the view that the untouchable should have, a leader to them from among themselves. Mahatma Gandhi was also of that opinion. When such discussions were going on, G.A. Gavai, an untouchable leader from Madhya Pradesh was contacting the Maharaja to help him in furthering the cause of social justice. To him, through a letter dated 1st Feb., 1920 Shahu informed to select a leader for the untouchable from among themselves and not from other castes just as the birds, animals and beasts select their respective leaders from among themselves.<sup>130</sup> Under the circumstances, the All India Depressed Classes Conference was held at Nagpur on 30th May 1920, under the Presidentship of Shahu Maharaja.

While addressing the Conference he said in the course of his

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129. Khairmode, C.B.; Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, Vol. I, p. 288.

130. Jadhao, B.B. Edr.-Op.cit. Appendix III, pp. 10-11.

talk that --

"Now some great men think that the higher classes think themselves insulted when I grant the Sanads to low caste men like Mahars and Mangs. But it is a mistake on their part. I am quite convinced that the service of the nation lies not in telling these communities to wait for twenty-four years in doubt and anxiety till they are thoroughly educated and see if they can get equal rights, in at once freeing them by cutting the oppressive, frightful chains that surround them. This is the only way to reach our goal."<sup>131</sup>

While speaking from the Depressed Class Conference held at Nasik he told --

"The social differences are based upon mere accident of birth, find no sanction from religion in any other country except ours - that no religion on the face of this earth sanctions such an institution as the caste except the Hindu Religion. On that account we ought to abolish the caste which has been the cause of many social struggles. My earnest advice has always been to build the structure of Self-Government of foundations firmer than those of castes. I, therefore, repeat my convictions that Self-Government without social union is undesirable and

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131. Latthe, A.B. : Op.cit., Vol. II, p. 501.

will be unstable.<sup>132</sup>

Thus after studying the problem of untouchables and untouchability from various angles Shahu told the masses that the caste distinctions are baseless and he was prepared to serve them to his last breath. If at all again he clarified that the Brahmins complain to the British and try to depose him, he would willingly hand over the Kolhapur Administration to his son and ~~do~~<sup>?</sup> serve the untouchables for ever.<sup>133</sup>

And to the fortunes of the untouchable with an ordinance, Shahu Chhatrapati, the King of Kolhapur destroyed the inhuman system of Vett-Virala - forced labour - with immediate effect in his Kolhapur State from 27th July, 1921.<sup>134</sup>

However, except such enactments that he passed in his State and his preachings in various conferences like the Nagpur, Delhi and others, the most powerful weapon that he used to destroy untouchability was his personal example. He practised equality not only in his personal life, but made others also to observe no untouchability in their personal life. Once, without pre-intimation he went to Tasgaon (Today in Sangli District) the Capital of

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132. B.C.B., A Royal Philosopher Speaks, pp. 54 to 57.

133. Jadhao, B.B. : Op.cit., p. 110.

134. K.S.G., Part-I dated 27th July, 1921.

Parasharambhau Patwardhan. The descendent of Patwardhans was astonished to see Shahu Chhatrapati standing before his palace in huge crowd surrounded by Mahars and other touchables. Suddenly then under tension, the Patwardhan requested him to honour the interior of his residence with his visit. And surprisingly the Maharaja, with the whole paraphernalia of his untouchable admirers followed Patwardhan in the Palace of Tasgaon. But nothing had happened to the Brahmin King and both of them, the Brahmin King and untouchables were purified as Latthe<sup>135</sup> told by the presence of Shahu Maharaja.

#### MESSAGE TO WORKERS

After the beginning of the non-Brahmin Movement in Maharashtra various groups of the uneducated workers among the non-Brahmins were inspired to seek benefits from their separate organisations. The workers in Bombay awakened by Mahatma Phule and his associate Narayan Meghaji Lokhande, had already good experience of their trade union like "Mill Hands Association."<sup>136</sup> But between the period of 1897 that is the year of Lokhande's death to 1918, the working class movement in Maharashtra was not conducted on the lines as it was to be to safeguard the interests of the workers. Rao Bahadur S.K. Bole, the helpmate of B.R. Ambedkar and a social reformer in Bombay, was ever ready to help and lead the needy workers. He was in

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135. Latthe, A.B. : Op.cit., Vol. II, p. 503.

136. Vaidya, G.B. (Ed.), Balbodha, December 1900, p. 196.

contact with the Maharaja and in those days, as the Maharaja was very much liked to listen and follow<sup>y</sup> by the non-Brahmins. Before that S.K. Bole had started in 1909, the Kamgar Hitvardhak Sabha to lead the movement of workers in Bombay and had good contacts with the Maharaja.

During all the days of the non-Brahmir Movement Shahu was very keen to grasp the problems of the working class, at Bombay. His visit to England in 1902, was so much fruitful to give him knowledge of the problems of the working community. After the declaration of the Montagu Announcement and by the end of the First World War, the whole European countries were enwrapp<sup>y</sup>ed by the thought of Communist Revolution in Russia. This had helped him to widen his outlook<sup>A</sup> of the workers' problems. Under the circumstances by chance S.K. Bole invited him to address the Bombay workers. There in Bombay thus while addressing the workers on November 10, 1918, he advised --

"Unity, mutual love, faith and perseverance, must be our weapons. I have already told you that in western countries, a struggle between capital and labour is going on. The war (First World War) has almost thrown the whole political power into the hands of the labour party. Russia and Germany were two great nations with unlimited monarchies. Now, in their place, is being established democratic government under the guidance of labour party.

In England also, the labour party is growing powerful. Even neutral countries like Holland will not remain unaffected by this wave. Every person who had reached majority must have the power of voting, that is to say the machinery of the Government must be conducted according to the majority. We too have to acquire this power and must, therefore, work with self-sacrifice and perseverance."<sup>137</sup>

Then advising the labourers to work in an orderly way, establish cooperative credit societies and follow the path of self-help, he pointed out at the inaugural speech of the 'Peoples' Union' of Bombay on 24th November 1918 that -

"As in England, Trades Union must be established here and all must know their own rights. The capitalist class consists chiefly of Brahmins and Vaishyas, and unless they are kept under control, the condition of labourers will hardly improve. The word labourer is not disrespectable. Although I am on the throne of Kolhapur, I feel proud of calling myself a soldier, farmer or labourer."<sup>138</sup>

Further explaining the need of intellectual emancipation

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137. Latthe, A.B., : Op.cit., Vol. II, pp. 575-76.

138. Bhosale, S.S. : Krantisukte, p. 133.

of the labouring class he said --

"It is impossible for the Kshatriyas and the Shudras to bend their heads before the religious yoke as before, when the principles of democracy are rapidly spreading everywhere."

A Maharaja advised thus, the labourers and non-Brahmins to fight for their rights and to follow the principles of democracy. Really one cannot expect such revolutionary thoughts from a King like him. But it was the truth that he himself practised in his own life the democratic principles. And all that he had done was not for becoming the leader of the masses, but simply to guide them to proper destination in human life.

The review of the activities that Shahu Maharaja carried on right from the starting of Satya Shodhak Samaj to the inauguration of People's Union in Bombay, had a common principle and approach of the same and one pattern. Firstly his love towards all masses seems to be pure and unalloyed. Secondly he wanted the masses to follow the principle of self-help and prepare their own front against all the atrocities and injustices done to them by the monopolists and religious bureaucrats. Thirdly to achieve all this he stressed the need of education to the masses and held education as an invigoration to give them strength against the ageold and inhuman

traditions. Fourthly it seems that he was aware of the new currents in the national and international politics and visualised the coming of people's Government or democracy. Naturally then, fifthly we see him preaching and preparing the masses to welcome the new way of life based on equality, mutual understanding, help and cooperation. In a sentence it must be said that all the activities of Shahu Maharaja related to Satya Shodhak Samaj, the Arya Samaj, the non-Brahmin movement, the problem of the untouchables etc. were only in the cause of liberating the masses from the burden of ancient traditions of five thousand years.



## CHAPTER SIX

### HIS THOUGHTS AND IDEAS

The period of Shahu's career from 2nd April 1894 to 6th May 1922 was primarily in India, the period of resurgence and political awakening. The days were rather <sup>x</sup> luminous and ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity encouraging. To the masses and their leaders, it was for seeking fortune to fight against the British power in India. But to a man who occupied a traditional throne and adorned the crown of a small State like Kolhapur, it was a period of trial and preparation for oneself to transfer power to his people. The ultra controversial forces of nationalism and imperialism, no doubt, might have created before Indian Princes their image as a pendulum and Shahu Maharaja as a King might not be an exception to that imagination. But the whole career he had put before us, certainly leads us to think that he lived the life as a sensible citizen of this land, and used the power he had, not to strengthen the roots of imperialism but to awake the masses. As a ruler, under the British paramount power, although it seemed, as if he was siding the British<sup>1</sup>, we find him at the same time helping the freedom fighters like Aurobindo Ghosh<sup>2</sup> and had contacts with Dr. Rash

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1. (A) Naik, T.B., Op.cit., p. 92.

(B) B.C.B. (Ed.)-A Royal Philosopher Speaks, p. 19.

2. While Aurobindo was in disguise and carrying on underground freedom movement Shahu sent him Rs. 5,000/-.

See Tophakhane, V.D., Op.cit., p. 17.

Behari Ghosh<sup>3</sup> the then leader of the Azad Hind Fauj in the East Asia. Really this was a wonderful role that he had played both with the alienated power and the native patriots.

Many instances are there to show Shahu's stand against the British. Moreover his knowledge of the changing world, especially of the abolition of the Monarchy in Germany and Russia<sup>4</sup>, and formation of the Labour Party in England<sup>5</sup>, made him to visualise the end of kings and kingdoms in the near future. Really it was wonderful that a king assumed powers at the wrong age of his twentieth, moved steadily in free style race to prepare his people for shouldering responsibilities of their own welfare. It is to be seen here, how far he had succeeded in accepting the challenge for inculcating new ideas of social justice, social freedom and Swaraj - Self-Government and had borne the same ideas while carrying on his work. In reply to such queries, his speeches and letters help us to know him thoroughly. Specially his speeches starting from the maiden one of 3rd May 1886<sup>6</sup> to the last one of 16th February 1922<sup>7</sup>, give us his ideas and thoughts

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3. K.A.O., S.D.R., No. 35, 19 No. 7465 and 7567 the first one dated 14th April 1918.

4. Bhosale, S.S. (Ed.), Krantisukte, p. 132.

5. Jadhao, B.B. : Rajarshi Shri Shahu M. Bhashane, p. 26.

6. K.S.G., Part I dated 12th May 1888, p. 72.

7. B.C.B. : Ed. Op.cit., p. 69  
Speech at the Third All India Conference of Depressed Classes held at Delhi.

on various subjects. However all the speeches and accounts of his thoughts are not traceable. Whatever <sup>3</sup>his speeches were available now are published by 1) Jaiendra Printing Press<sup>8</sup>, Kolhapur, 2) Bhagava Zenda - a weekly at Kolhapur edited by D.Y. Kurne<sup>9</sup>, 3) B.B. Jadhao<sup>10</sup>, 4) Yedekar<sup>11</sup> and 5) S.S. Bhosale<sup>12</sup>. From all these collections of printed speeches of Shahu Maharaja, as has been stated by S.S. Bhosale, there are in all only 24 speeches on written records.<sup>13</sup> Many <sup>14</sup>of the speeches might have been destroyed or gone unnoticed. The Kolhapur State Gazette and "Report on the General Administration of the Kolhapur State" tell that on a number of occasions in every year of his career, Shahu Maharaja had advised his people, administrators and on many occasions, people outside Kolhapur also. But it is a tragedy that all these speeches are not available for study.

Out of the printed and available speeches of Shahu, many seem to be delivered at the conferences of the people other than the Brahmins and a few in honour of Governors of

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8. This booklet - "Shri-Manmaharaj Shahu Chhatrapati Sarkar Yanchi Bhashane" - 1920, was published on behalf of the Kolhapur State. <sup>9</sup> Bhagavazenda - issues II, VIII and XXXVII of 1920, 21 and 23.
  10. Shri B.B. Jadhao has edited and published the "Adhunik Bharatiya Purogami Rashtravadache Janak - Rajarshi Shri Shahu Maharajanchi Bhashane", 1971.
  11. Prof. Shyam Yedekar has edited the "Chhatrapati Shahu Maharajanchi Bhashane", 1971.
  12. Dr. S.S. Bhosale has edited the "Krantisukte - Rajarshi Chhatrapati Shahu (Marathi) and Dr. Bhosale, Prof. Chavan and Prof. Bandivdekar have edited the "A Royal Philosopher Speaks" in 1975.
  13. Bhosale, S.S. (Ed.): Krantisukte - Introduction, p. 3.

Bombay and some European guests. Most of the speeches, therefore, might have been of spontaneous nature and not prepared as well as well thought out. Besides, as the people to whom he was speaking were mostly the commoners, the rayat, the examples and anecdotes he had used in his speeches were of simple nature. However all these speeches had a common theme of public welfare though they varied in contents and approach. Again all of them had touched various aspects of human development just as educational, economic, social, religious and even political. With utmost care, therefore, an attempt is made to collect scattered thoughts of Shahu under the heads Educational, Economic, Social, Religious and Political.

#### EDUCATIONAL THOUGHTS

Education is not only the process of acquiring knowledge, but as Mahatma Gandhi <sup>↑</sup>told, the development of mind and body. Without education no man in any country or age would seek self growth properly. Even in the Hindu society, education was held as the third eye. From ancient times in India, education and educated men were highly respected. The educated men were supposed to be the Guru, - teacher, - of the society. Without education, there was no progress, was the general understanding. Dr. Ambedkar had also aimed through

education, "to promote intellectual, moral and social democracy."<sup>14</sup> Almost all the nationalists, social reformers and thinkers of the 19th century India had immensely contributed to the thought and growth of education. In fact, educational work was spade work for every reformer and politician of the last century. Mahatma Phuley, Lokmanya Tilak, Lala Lajpat Roy, Ashutosh Mukherjee, Shama Prasad Mukherjee and even Dr. B.R. Ambedkar had first attended the responsibility to spread up education. Shri Shahu Maharaja, as a king and reformer, looked upon this aspect of human development as a great need of times.

Before starting the Victoria Maratha Boarding on April 18, 1901, Shahu Maharaja had thought of diffusing education in Kolhapur. On 4th July 1900, an order was issued to grant concessions in the educational fees to the sons, grandsons and grand grand sons of the rayats from whom the local fund cess was collected.<sup>15</sup> On such occasions of granting concessions in fees and establishing schools, and boarding houses in Kolhapur, so also while addressing Educational Conferences, like the Maratha Education Conference of Khamgaon of 1917, he had enunciated the importance and necessity of education.

While welcoming Lord Sandhurst, the Governor of Bombay on

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14. People's Education Society, Bombay, Silver Jubilee Souvenir, 1976, p. 8.

15. K.S.G., Part-I, 4th July 1900, p. 63.

28th March 1895, at the opening ceremony of the new building of the Fergusson College, Poona, he said "The sole aim and object of an educational society is the spread of knowledge."<sup>16</sup> At the same time he stressed the point that education must be made accessible to all classes of society.

As the Chhatrapati of Kolhapur Shahu had generously donated right from his boyhood to the Deccan Education Society and Poona Girls School, in 1886<sup>17</sup> and many educational institutions in Kolhapur, Maharashtra and out of Maharashtra<sup>18</sup> also. The establishment of the Tarabai Boarding of Poona, the Shivaji (IV) Maratha Boarding of Ahmednagar, the Udoji Marathi and Vanjari Boardings at Nasik were founded in 1920 on the inspiration and generous donations of Shahu Maharaja.<sup>19</sup>

Education simply for the cause of education was not the motto of the Maharaja. He looked upon it as a means to free masses from the age-old domination of priest craft and inhuman forms of caste system. He had once explained his stand (as-

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16. B.C.B. (Ed.) Op.cit., p. 5.

17. Limaye, P.M. : The History of the Deccan Education Society, Poona, p. 58.

18. K.A.O., S.D.R. No. 12162, Kolhapur dated 26th July 1920. A Donation cheque No. 1383363 of Rs. 10,000 was sent to Mr. Kalicharan Nanda Gavali of Gondia as a sum of Rs. 5,000 each to Nasik and Nagpur Boarding houses of untouchables.

"My principle has been to take care of the weak among my subjects more than strong. Their condition has from the first appealed to me personally and it has been the one aim of my administration to do my level best to cure the evil. With this end in view, I have been labouring hard for the last twenty-five years. I have been offering them special facilities to learn."<sup>20</sup>

Further in the same speech he told--


When I assumed my powers, I found that they had no leader. That was a great want. The evil of India is that each caste looks after its own people and they are indifferent to others. I therefore, encouraged the different castes such as Marathas, Lingayats, Jains, Tailors, Goldsmiths, Mohamedans, and the depressed Classes or 'Untouchables' as they are called, to have their own hostels. There the boys are looked after by superintendents of their own castes. They can study there free from the unhealthy influence of their homes."

In Kolhapur State, education from the Primary School to College, from Teachers' Training Institute to the Technical School and Agricultural School was made available and flourished under Shahu's regime. He was a great lover of

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19. Naik, T.B., Op.cit., p. 79.

20. B.C.B. (Ed.)—Op.cit., p. 38.

learning. However, he was more worried and concerned to provide primary education to his subjects. On the occasion of inaugurating the Udaji Maratha Boarding House at Nasik, on 15th April 1920, he clarified his thoughts on primary education ~~as~~ 

"Free and compulsory primary education is the only invigorating tonic that will enable the lower classes to throw off this incubus of the past (the caste system). I have commenced free and compulsory education in my State and I have no doubt that the next generation will be a literate generation."<sup>21</sup> He explained further that—

"While I lay great stress on primary education I have not neglected higher and collegiate education. My State is smaller than such districts as Satara<sup>22</sup> or Belgaum and yet there are seven high schools in existence and two more will commence their life very soon. At the top of this all there is a fulfledge college."<sup>23</sup>

"You will no doubt understand that my efforts after education are motivated solely because I am most anxious to give self-Government as early as possible to my subjects. If all my subjects had reached the literacy test of vernacular third, I would have very cheerfully

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21. B.C.B. (Ed.) Op.cit., p. 49.

22. Upto 1950, Satara district in the Bombay Presidency was one and united. In 1950 it was divided into two as the North Satara and South Satara and then in 1956 the North Satara became Satara and South Satara the Sangli District.

23. The famous Rajaram College of Kolhapur.



handed over to them the responsibilities of Government and retired on pension sufficient to maintain myself. The whole burden of peace, order and good Government rests on my shoulders today. The subjects are responsible for the due payment of the revenue. In future the responsibility to pay tax and administer the revenues will belong to the subjects. But my subjects must be partially if not wholly fit to take such a responsibility. In other words, I believe that the entire population must have reached the stage of primary education before a section of it is provided with advanced education."<sup>24</sup>

Thus Shahu had a basic aim of spreading education, specially the primary one to awake masses from the agelong slumber of ignorance. He was looked upon by the subjects as a father and he was worried about the poor conditions of the people. His spontaneous words as mentioned <sup>X</sup>now that, "The whole burden of peace, order and good Government rests on my shoulders today" prove hundred per cent, his strong desire to hand over his State responsibilities. But as the majority belonged to ignorant class, he yoked <sup>X</sup>himself to seek through all possible means like starting schools and boarding houses to teach and awake the masses for understanding and shouldering their own responsibilities. Such a work was not done by

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24. B.C.B. (Ed.)-Op.cit., pp. 49-50.

the educated class in India. The so-called hereditary educated class of the Hindus, or the Brahmins never understood the importance of mass education and made education a monopoly of their caste only. Naturally, not alone Shahu, but including even Brahmin reformers like 'Lokahitwadi',<sup>25</sup> had severely criticised the self-centred educational attitude of them. Shahu owed, therefore, gratefully to the British not for their // Empire, but educational policy and said--

"With the object of enlightening the masses the British Government has kept the educational institutions open to people of all classes. We can find no parallel even in Ramraj to the immense opportunity which is given to us of taking education since the reign of Queen Victoria and Her decendents. Notwithstanding this the ambrosia of learning is sedulously kept in the hands of the Brahmins."<sup>26</sup>

It is a tragedy of our nation, that till the times of Shahu except some non-Brahmin reformers like Mahatma Phuley, no

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25. Lokahitwadi alias Gopal Hari Deshmukh - a pioneering Brahmin revolutionary (1823-1892) had criticised the Brahmins as "The Brahmins monopolized education by trick. The others (other than the Brahmins) should not be taught was made the religion. At present they occupied almost all posts (in British Govt.). Thus by both sides priest crafts and profession - services - doors were closed by them to prevent the entry of people other than the Brahmins." See Shatapatre edited by Inamdar, p. 342.

26. B.C.B. (Ed.) Op.cit., p. 47.

leader or reformer from the Brahmins felt necessity of educating the masses. In Kolhapur State, after the commencement of the Boarding Movement, about 1912 A.D. Shahu Maharaja thought to venture upon a new scheme of introducing free and compulsory primary education.<sup>27</sup> As a step towards this scheme he formulated in 1912, a plan to start village schools on a ~~Watandari~~ system by granting rent-free lands to school masters.<sup>28</sup> But because of some defects in that system - mainly that of the Watandari system of teachers' appointment - the scheme was held unsuitable to fit the times.

On September 21, 1917, The Compulsory Education Act was passed and published in the Kolhapur State Gazette on 29th of the same month, stating its object as—

"To make all people in the State of Kolhapur, able to read and write and thereby to improve their status, the compulsory Education Rules are made."<sup>29</sup>

Earlier to that on 30th July, an order was issued by him to introduce "Free and compulsory Education"<sup>30</sup> from the Ganesh Chaturthi celebrated in the month of September of the same year.

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27. Gen-Ad-Kop. for 1912-1913, p. 51.

28. Latthe, A.B. Op.cit., Vol. II, p. 448.

29. K.S.G., Part I dated 29th Sept., 1917, p. 110.

30. K.S.G., Part I dated 1, 1917, p. 89.

Shahu thus did everything possible under his power to enhance his policy for the spread of primary education in Kolhapur. He had not, however, neglected other branches of education. While addressing the students and staff of the Rajaram College, on the occasion of Prize Distribution Ceremony held on 3rd April 1893, he said -

It is a truth that every student here would admit, in theory, that the doors of the public service are over-crowded with candidates whose competition injures themselves and that India wants more of its educated men to devote themselves to mercantile, professional and industrial pursuits. As I say this is generally admitted, but few yet apply the truth to their own cases and indeed courage and enterprise are needed to strike out a new line and to leave the beaten tracks."<sup>31</sup>

And he encouraged there the four students of Rajaram College to go to Poona in 1893 and enter the dairy farm business. After pointing out the importance of the physical education in the same speech the young Maharaja<sup>32</sup> told the students of Rajaram College earnestly "to practise the virtue of self-help." Sports in schools and colleges as well as in general were much encouraged personally by him. In 1912, a Cricket pavilion, known as Col. Merewether Ground was opened at Kolhapur. Indoor and outdoor games and wrestling were highly

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31. B.C.B. (Ed.)-Op.cit., p. 3.

32. This speech was made before the assumption of power and Shahu Maharaja was hardly nineteen years old.

appreciated and encouraged by State aid and his personal attention.

To give all people a chance to advance in social, industrial, educational and administrative matters, Shahu Maharaja had paid sufficient attention to provide such type of instructions. The starting of the Technical School in 1903, the King Edward Agricultural Institute in 1912, the Patil School in 1919, prove his interest in industrial and administrative and other branches of education. At the Maratha Education Conference held at Khamgaon on 27th December 1917, Shahu Maharaja had clarified his educational philosophy. "Without education no progress was achieved by any nation in the world"<sup>33</sup> he said and stressed the importance of free and compulsory education to India. There in the same speech he drew attention of the non-Brahmins to utilitarian value of education in their life and told "We must understand first the problem of education and its many aspects. The idea that we ought to remain farmers and soldiers is not satisfactory. We must enter into private enterprise, various trades and reputed professions. Now-a-days we do not enter into trade and commerce. In the twentieth century, progress of a nation depends upon trade and likewise movements. Truly speaking, trade is religion of the western countries. By religion I mean, intellectual self-progress. If we do not succeed in creating

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33. Jadhao, B.B., Op.cit., p. 2.

trade movement, all our other movements are of no use. I trust in trade movement, so that I have given to my two sons and sons of my relatives, education in trade and commerce."<sup>34</sup> He had thus touched all aspects of education and tried his best to inspire people not only in Kolhapur and Maharashtra, but all the people in India also.

In brief, the inspiring ideal of Shahu Maharaja was to take education to the masses and help them to look at it as a ladder of progress, prosperity and manhood. The Maharaja saw in education an immense power to kindle unhatched potentialities of the non-Brahmins. And "until the general level of education among the masses has risen and is partially equalized with that of the higher castes,"<sup>35</sup> he was not at all prepared "to make any constitutional Change in" his State. The speeches of the Maharaja at the Maratha Conference of Khamgaon in 1917 and at the inaugural function of the Udaji Maratha Boarding at Nasik in 1920, gave the full and complete text of his educational philosophy. To enshrine his own views he had opened schools, Boarding houses, educational institutions in Kolhapur State as well as outside it. Kolhapur, his capital city, was during his life time called "the Mother of Boarding Houses" as England was called the Mother of Democracy. Thus, various accounts and his educational policy show that Shahu

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34. Jadhao, B.B., Op.cit., p. 7.

35. B.C.B. (Ed.), Op.cit., p. 48.

Maharaja was earnestly wedded to eradicate the age-old diseases of illiteracy, ignorance and inhuman forms of Hindu society through the spread of education.

#### ECONOMIC PROGRESS AND THOUGHTS

From the very beginning of his royal career, Shahu Maharaja was very keen on the economic progress of his State. Agriculture was, in those days, the main industry to fetch revenue to State, and bread to the masses. But the agriculturists were very poor and ruined in debts. The epidemic of plague and famines during 1896-1899, again worsened the economic condition of the farmers as well as the Kolhapur State. Under such tensions and worries, he was made to go on his Coronation Trip to England in 1902 to attend the Coronation Ceremony of King Edward VII. This trip helped him to know utility of industrial revolution in England and its need in India. After coming from England and while inaugurating the working of the newly started first Cotton Mill - the Shahu Chhatrapati Mills, Kolhapur, on 27th September 1906 he said --

"No one can travel into England and on the continent of Europe without taking mental note. During the coronation celebrations of our beloved King Emperor, I had opportunities of seeing in England and elsewhere

the extra-ordinary progress made by the Industrial Arts and often struck me that something on those lines might be done even in my little State. How best to utilise the resources of small principality for the good of my people, was a question. I had been constantly revolving in my mind when to my agreeable surprise, I found one day that the matter was being earnestly taken up by the Sardars and moneyed classes of this district. I rejoiced to think that the spirit of self-help was alive among my people and all that was needed to foster that spirit was to give enterprise like the helping hand."<sup>36</sup>

Further, after pointing out the existence of State and private concerns in Kolhapur State, he continued --

"I am opposed to energies of the already over-worked machinery of the State being diverted to objects alien to its proper functions and my aim has been and will be to develop industries brought about by the cooperation of the people themselves."

Thus Shahu wanted people's participation and not a system of monopoly by any class and community in the sphere of industrial life. He, therefore, advised the shareholders and Government officials in his State who were assigned the responsibilities of managing the affairs of the Shahu Mills that --

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36. B.C.B. (Ed.) Op.cit., p. 11.



"I quite sympathise with your determination not to let this concern go into the hands of the great Mill owner and Millionaires, but I am sure you recognise the heavy responsibility involved in this and I earnestly hope that you will spare no pains to make the interest of the shareholders. Your direct and permanent concern show the public at large by your success that mercantile talents are not a monopoly of Bombay alone."<sup>37</sup>

However, the days of Shahu were not overcrowded by industrial growth and all the while, agriculture attracted the attention of the public and State. He did, naturally try from the start to pay attention to and improve agriculture and help the agriculturists.

In the Agriculture Conference of the Bombay Presidency held on 8th November 1917, the Maharaja had drawn attention of the British Government to the problems of the agriculturists. What he spoke in that conference will help to know his stand -

"On the present occasion, I am happy to note that the interest of Government is not going to be centred round the supply of raw products for the manufacturing centres of England but it is going to be extended to the general

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37. B.C.B. (Ed.)—Op.cit., p. 12.

development of agriculture and improvement in the conditions of agriculturists. More than 80% population of this country is depended on the agriculture industry. In my State, practically the whole State depends for its prosperity on agriculture. We have hardly any other industry worth speaking of. My interest in agriculture, I may say, is of long standing and I have been making efforts to assist my people."<sup>38</sup>

Then in the course of his talk, he classified the disabilities of farmers as -

- "1. His ignorance, i.e. his illiteracy
2. His want as means to get cheap capital
3. His smallness of holdings
4. And want of organisation in the disposal of his produce."<sup>39</sup>

This shows how Shahu was fully aware of the disabilities and hardships of farmers. His efforts of starting an Agricultural Institute in his State, <sup>8</sup>well gave him credit for making efforts to solve the difficulties of farmers. He wanted first, the removal of farmers' disabilities through education, State monetary help and guidance. In the same conference, he therefore, said - "Education should create a pride for the ancestral industry and not contempt. A village school will

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38. B.C.B. (Ed.)-Op.cit., p. 21

39. Ibid., p. 22.

generally be provided with a small farm to create pride for physical labour. Our boys should understand the dignity of labour."<sup>40</sup> He had then suggested various means also to remove the disabilities of farmers.

In 1920 at the time of united inauguration programme of Shri Rajaram Industrial School, Boarding House and a show room as well as the 5th Arya Kshatriya Conference, Shahu Maharaja was invited as the President of the function. After advising the audience of that function he turned to the conditions of peasants and their ageold farming implements and told —

"It is universally accepted that the progress of ~~the~~ nation depends upon the growth of various industries and professions."<sup>41</sup> However he knew that India was mainly an agricultural country and had 80% of the population living on agriculture. The conditions of peasantry were, but miserable. Hence he stressed the point to increase agricultural productivity by using modern means and scientific methods of agriculture. He assured again the State assistance for carrying on research in making a better plough and better Mot.<sup>42</sup> He was ever worried to free peasants from the clutches of the money-lenders. Interest-free loans and tagai loans were then made general features of the finance department. Cooperative societies

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40. B.C.B. (Ed.)-Op.cit., p. 22.

41. Jadhao, B.B.,-Op.cit., p. 119.

42. Ibid., p. 120.

Act<sup>43</sup> of 1912 was also passed to help the farmers and start a new cooperative movement in Kolhapur. From 1894, the new plantations of cash crops like tea and coffee were highly encouraged by him. While writing to a friend on 24th October 1904, he says - "This morning I went upto Panhala and was delighted to find the tea planted there in an excellent condition. I think our experiment did fair to succeed. I should like, therefore, to have a bigger plantation and should feel obliged if you could kindly get for me about ten maunds of tea seeds."<sup>44</sup>

Without irrigation agriculture was just as a cow without milk. When Shahu had assumed powers of his State, Kolhapur was described as the Dry District.<sup>45</sup> As Latthe had told<sup>x</sup>, after his visit to England in 1902, the Maharaja got an idea to create irrigation facilities<sup>x</sup> to the farmers and thought of constructing dams - big and small. Radhanagari Dam was his dream. And on the eve of starting the work of Radhanagari Dam he said, "My life's work will have been done when I complete this project."<sup>46</sup> How keenly he was interested in the upliftment of the peasantry can well be understood from this sentence. Every possible effort was made by him, thus,

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43. Marathe, K.D., - Vat Hukum, p. 287.

44. Latthe, A.B., - Op.cit., Vol. I, p. 284.

45. Modak, P.B., - The Industrial Survey of the Kolhapur State, p. 161 (1896).

46. Latthe, A.B., - Op.cit., Vol. I, p. 286.

to improve the condition of farmers.

The Report of the Industrial Survey of Kolhapur published in 1896, was the ~~foremost~~ genuine effort of Shahu Maharaja to change Kolhapur from the mediaeval to modern State. After creating educational facilities ~~to~~<sup>x</sup> masses, the Maharaja turned to preach them the principles of self-help and cooperation. At the Kanpur Conference of the Kurmi Kshatriyas, held on 19th April 1919, he told in his presidential address that -

"In the Vedic time, there was freedom of profession - Agricultural work is so pious that in Vedic times, once in every year, the Chakravarti Samrat and his ministers used to plough ... I do not regard agricultural work either low or bad -- While carrying on agricultural work, no question comes of reducing the martial spirit. On whose work, the whole human race depends must not be regarded low. In Europe farmers are respected. There the farmers are occupying high positions in State services."<sup>47</sup>

Then bringing out the importance of the mutual help and cooperation among themselves, he said that all people in India must realise this new way of life and make their country happy.

Further, while stressing the importance of industrialisation he explained "Today instead of State patronage, the patronage

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47. Bhosale, S.S., : Krantisukte, pp. 105, 110.

of the people is important for flourishing industries. The days of carrying on all types of skilled work, have gone away for ever. Large number of people now should come together, pool skills, brain, capital and labour together and work on cooperative basis ... They should start on cooperative basis, credit cooperative societies."<sup>48</sup> Thus Shahu Maharaja had richly contributed the economic thought of India and encouraged the economic prosperity of the Kolhapur people.

#### SOCIAL THOUGHTS AND AN IDEA OF EGALITARIAN SOCIETY

Most of his time and energy in life Shahu had spent for the cause of social reconstruction. How to change the old dogmatic society to suit the needs of democracy and modernity based on the age of science was his basic problem. Right from the first year of his royal career, he was much worried to find out new means and methods for practicing his aims and ambitions. Admission to the non-Brahmins in the Government services, opening of the schools for the untouchables, starting of Boarding Movement in Kolhapur, fighting for Vedokta rights, patronage to Satya Shodhak Samaj and Arya Samaj, contacts with the Theosophists and non-Brahmins in Madras, encouragement to the Marathas and to the untouchables for their educational progress, and social emancipation and the message to workers in Bombay to form their separate unions etc. were his genuine

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48. Bhosale, S.S., Krantisukte, p. 116.

efforts to seek unity, integrity and social upliftment in our country.

The principle of "Self-help"<sup>49</sup> was preached by him to students and masses alike, from his young days. What was dear and important to him was the welfare of the masses. But in his State, as well as outside it, because of the caste-ridden society, the people other than the Brahmins were thrown into the realm of ignorance and poverty. The Brahmins behaved just as the masters of the society. Even in the State Administration of Kolhapur, their dominance prevailed highly. The Maharaja had himself in 1920 described the situation as -

"At the time I was invested with ruling powers, I found Kolhapur dominated by the educated people of a single caste. There was not a single educated person in the civil service belonging to the backward classes. To raise their status I felt it but proper to adopt the policy of entertaining them in a liberal way in the civil services of the State. I gave deserving ones from them sanads, to practice, instituted special Scholarships for their education and established boardings to help the students. The good results of my work along with line<sup>9</sup> for the last 25 years are just appearing on the horizon."<sup>50</sup>

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49. B.C.B., Op.cit., to students, p. 3 to masses p. 12.

50. Ibid. 55

About the Brahmins, a deep rooted feeling seemed to be in existence in the minds of the non-Brahmins that the Brahmins were enemies of reforms and obstructed the progress of the non-Brahmins. From Mahatma Phuley to Shahu Maharaja, this thought was carried on. And to prove the bitter truth more bitter, the Brahmins, including their leaders, from Vishnu Shastri Chiplunkar to Lokmanya Tilak tried their best to oppose reforms and preach boldly the reverse of the Hindu life. The situation in Kolhapur was not exception to that. In his boyhood Shahu had observed that while his father was in happy mood, Brahmin officials and clerks were to take disadvantage and on other occasions spoil the cases of the non-Brahmins.<sup>51</sup> Naturally, after coming to power, as Bhai Bagal has said, Maharaja had encouraged the non-Brahmins to learn and enter the State services.<sup>52</sup>

Shahu Maharaja was basically against the caste system. Superiority of a man based on a caste or birth was not acceptable to him. What he did throughout his life was an effort to awake and ameliorate the masses against the caste system. Even untouchability was not acceptable to him. That is why at the Conference of the Depressed Classes held at Nagpur, on 16th April, 1920, he clarified -

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51. Bagal, Madhavrao, Shri Shahu Maharaj Yanchya Athavani, p.6.

52. Ibid.



"The social differences are based upon mere accident of birth, find no sanction from religion in any other country except ours. The ugly aspect which these social distinctions wear is most plainly reflected in the treatment which has been meted out to you by men of the higher castes. Is it not a disgraceful thing that you who are our brethren should be regarded as untouchables and should be treated in a way <sup>x</sup>for less respected than cats, pigs and dogs ? The principle of untouchability I venture to think, is a recent addition to the religious scriptures which govern the life of the Hindus."<sup>53</sup>

It is wonderful that a Hindu Maratha king, who was ~~totally~~ conservative, had turned to be a social revolutionary. All this change, however, was not sudden. It was a process to err and learn. This had also been accepted by him at the inaugural function of the Maratha Boarding at Nasik, as -

"At one time, I confess, I was conservative and as an upholder of orthodoxy believed in the perpetuation of the caste system. The idea that thereby I was obstructing the progress of others never occurred to and I even felt it dangerous to my religion to preside over public meetings of the particular castes. But the reason in the two castes are as distant as the poles. To preside over

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53. B.C.B. (Ed.), Op.cit., p. 54.

caste meetings was to me in early days an irreligious ~~act~~ act. Now I do not like to preside over them because I fear that thereby I am committing the sin of strengthening the caste feelings."<sup>54</sup>

Rightly, therefore, in continuation of his speech he warned strongly the leaders who loved their respective castes that —

"To the leaders of the different communities I have only one message to convey. Do not be short sighted. Have a vision of the future. To dissolve castes is a necessity. To uphold them is a sin. Castes are obstacles in the path of the common advancement of us all and our duty, therefore, is to remove it with all the courage we can muster. Hold your caste meetings but ignore not the point that they are only a means to an end. The end of our caste meeting is to end the castes. Let not then your caste meetings help them to mend."

Then turning to those who feel that not the caste distinctions but the caste ~~zealousy~~ jealousy is to be removed, he explained —

"Unity is out of the question when ~~then~~ the people are divided into impervious compartments. For a time, to

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54. B.C.B. (Ed.) Op.cit., p. 43.

gain an object they may transcend their social boundaries and be one; but the cohesion cannot be lasting. There are some who argue that what is necessary to abolish is not the caste-system, but caste enmity. If such who argue \* in this view are really unsophisticated, we can only pity the poor understanding, for caste enmity is the effect of caste distinction. To avoid this effect, the only remedy I see is to remove the cause."<sup>55</sup>

However, it was not an easy work to abolish the caste system. It was not only the Brahmin community who adhered to castes<sup>\*</sup> importance, but the Marathas and others also. Shahu Maharaja knew this fact and made experiments and efforts to change the old course of Hindu life. An incidence~~ce~~ in this regard is enough to grasp purity of his thought.

Once, it so happened that in the course of chatting the \* social situation in Maharashtra with a Barrister, Kevalkar from Sangli, the Maharaja <sup>X?</sup> ~~outrandom~~ spoke "Kevalkar, I strongly feel to tour the whole State and have meals in every Maharawada." (the outskirts abodes of the Mahars - the untouchables)

Kevalkar could not understand as to why his Maharaja had gone mad and was thinking to dine with the Mahars. He,

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55. B.C.B. (Ed.), Op.cit., p. 44.

therefore, curiously enough inquired about the matter. And the Maharaja explained -

"You see, Mr. Kevalkar, once I had been to Satara. There, cooking arrangements were made specially for us. Meals were prepared purely of the Brahminical system. Cooks<sup>56</sup> were also Brahmins. The time of dinner was approaching. After having bath, I entered into the kitchen to see how far preparations were completed. Some pots were still boiling. There was much distance between any two of boiling pots. One <sup>28</sup>naked cook (with a pancha<sup>57</sup> at his waist) with a cat on his hand was moving through between the boiling pots. He saw me and said "you cannot move to this side (kitchen). If you would touch the pots all would go to the hell." "As soon as I heard those words I felt a dagger thrust in my heart. Am I lower than that cat ? I put the question to me. If <sup>†</sup> the Chhatrapati like me was treated with such insult, what would have been to the untouchables ? So, from that incidence I strongly feel to dine with the Mahars - their people and children together."<sup>58</sup>

A number of similar instances can be quoted to show

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56. His was the word<sup>†</sup> for cooks 'Sovalekari'.

57. The word is mine.

58. Bagal, Madhavrao, - Shri Shahu M.Y.A., p. 294.

the experiment which Shahu had done to break the caste rigidity and casteism. Two more of such instances will certainly help to know his heart -

To the west of Kolhapur, Sontali was a permanent camp of the Kolhapur Chhatrapatis. While staying there Shahu Maharaja used to come to Kolhapur by a zigzag way. After the main road, the approach road turned down to enter into the capital. On the turns of the road, Phaseparadhis - nomads - used to await the old type horse chariot of him which wrangled on the rough roads. Once the Phaseparadhis saw the Maharaja coming and rushed to him saying in their rough - rugged language "Ye Maharaja, jara thamb, Tula dyayala hyoa Sasa aanalaya evada ghe" (Oh King, stop a moment. Take this rabbit which we have brought for you). The Maharaja stopped his vehicle, took up the rabbit and went on.

In the dining hall on that day he sat for dinner as usual and the moment he touched the flesh of the rabbit, he stopped eating, called the attendants -

"Go and see the Phaseparadhis on that turn of my road. Bring them here. Go immediately with vehicle. I have forgotten to call them for dinner."

After sometime he was informed of the arrival of the Phaseparadhis and the attendant expected from him to make arrangements of their dinner saying -

"Maharaj, where should their dinners be arranged ? in public or state ?" (in Khashyat or in Kharchyat)

And the Maharaja scolded him - "You senseless fellow, I am eating their food, and you are asking me as to where their dinners be served either in public or state (Khashyat or in Kharchyat). Go and call them to sit with me."<sup>59</sup>

The Maharaja belonged to the Maratha caste but never sided them on the basis of caste. He tried his best to treat all - Marathas and non-Marathas - alike.

As reformative atmosphere was created by him in his State, the untouchables began to bear courage to come forward for enjoying life ~~(of manhood)~~. Once some young men ~~of~~ them, Gangaram Kamble, Govinda Bhandare, Shantaram Sarnaik, Ganapat Pawar, Mhasuji Ligade, Limbaji Ligade and Punjab Hulswar - all the Mahars - drank the water at the touchable tap in the Bazar. This was a very horrible ~~incidence~~. The Mahars - untouchables - touched the tap of the upper caste Hindus. The touchables naturally spured their wrath against the young Mahars, beat them severely. On that occasion a Christian shop-keeper gave asylum to the young untouchables when they were trying to save their lives.

The news of this riot was spread soon all over the city.

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59. Bagal, Madhavrao, - Shri Shahu M.Y.A., p. 249.

Shahu Maharaja, as soon as he heard the news, moved to that spot. The caste Hindus, specially the Marathas crowded around him on the spot and appealed to him -

"Maharaj, the Mahars have now become arrogant. They are giving up traditions of their lower status. Today they have taken waters, tomorrow they would enter our houses. We will not tolerate all such things. Your Highness must punish them severely."

Immediately on the spot, the Maharaja replied -

"I am going to stop such affairs for all the times to come, so that there would be no complaint of this nature. I am a King of all the people. Mahar, Mang and others are also my subjects. Water is not created for a single caste people.

Beware you first, if you repeat and insult them again in the manner you have done now, your actions of such nature would certainly be prevented by law. Do you understand ?"

And the great noble soul of the Hindus, promised help and asylum to Gangaram Kamble and his caste fellows - the Mahars.<sup>60</sup>

Shahu Maharaja had thus adopted various means and,

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60. Bagal, Madhavrao, - Shri Shahu M.Y.A., p. 158.

Also see Salunkhe, P.B. (Ed.), Shahu Gaurav Granth - Article by Shri S.M. Shirke, pp. 504-505.

methods to minimise the undue <sup>↑</sup>importance of the Hindu caste system.

While narrating in 1920 to his teacher - S.M. Fraser<sup>61</sup>, who was on his send-off visit to Kolhapur, Shahu Maharaja reviewed what he had done to change the society, in these words -

"During all this time it has been my earnest wish and constant endeavour to do everything in my power to educate the masses, to inspire them with a higher standard of life, to root out superstition and with it the causes that have led to the singularly artificial state of our society - the inequalities between man and man - that we see on all sides." However, it was and is a difficult job even today. He knew it well and continued, "The task is not easy nor the work light. The inertia of ages has to be overcome and the old order of things has to be changed out."<sup>62</sup>

#### PEACEFUL REVOLUTION

In the Kolhapur State observance of untouchability was

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61. Sir S.M. Fraser, his teacher was retired from the I.C.S. and was to voyage for England permanently. Before his voyage he was invited to pay a visit and see Kolhapur.

62. B.C.B., Op.cit., p. 110.



made a penal offence in 1919.<sup>63</sup> Educational facilities were created and Free and Compulsory education Rules were also applied to the untouchables. He banned the Weth - the Hajeri systems and abolished Mahar Vatans by making Mahar Vatan lands rayatawa. They were also granted the right to carry swords. To nomadic tribe people like Kanjar Bhat, Phaseparadhis and Mang Garudi, agricultural lands and plots for constructing houses were granted by him. The Maharaja wanted no artificial distinctions between man and man and practically lived the same life. But the caste Hindus were not to be changed on their own. He knew the conservative mind of the Hindus and advised a peaceful revolution against the caste system. At the All India Conference of the Untouchable Classes held at Delhi from 13th to 16th February 1922, he stressed this point while appealing to the untouchables -

"I pray you not to stick to your hereditary professions alone. You must make an emphatic struggle to educate yourselves and enter into the army and the various other offices of several departments of Government. Not only that but you should follow the independent professions of Pleader, Barrister, Doctor and Merchants; you should attain proficiency in all these lines and push yourselves forward."

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63. K.S.G., Part IV, dated 23.8.1919, p. 47.

Further, after describing the changed circumstances in India, specially after the introduction of the Montagu Chelmsford Reform, he made the untouchables aware that -

"In this 20th century it has been an acknowledged principle of the world that the way of progress and prosperity is not bloodshed and revolution but a peaceful revolution. The international conferences at Washington and Geneva are only expositions of this principle. Let us also then accept and follow the same principle."<sup>64</sup>

What he had told at the Nagpur Conference of the Untouchables is very important even today so far as our national unity is concerned. The very charming words of the Maharaja were-

"I am of opinion that the salvation of this country depends upon the abolition of the caste system. It is, therefore, the prime need of the time that there should be intermarriages on a large scale notwithstanding the opposition to interdining. Before we can expect a wide spread of intermarriages we must first of all change the law which at present declares the posing of such marriage illegitimate and deprives them of the right of inheritance."<sup>65</sup>

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64. Jadhao, B.B. Op.cit., p. App. 18.

65. B.C. Op.cit., p. 62.

During that period, Vitthal Bhai Patel the eldest brother of Sardar Patel, the first Deputy Prime Minister of India, had tabled in the Central Assembly a Bill known as Intercaste Marriage Bill for the approval of the Government. This Bill was known as Patel Bill. Referring to that Bill, the Maharaja continued "The Hon'ble Mr. Patel's Bill in the Supreme Legislative Council" was a necessity, although that the Bill would have resulted in lowering the dignity of the Brahmins. The Bill naturally had been most violently opposed by the Brahmin section of Press.<sup>66</sup> From the standpoint of the Brahmin interest it was natural that they should oppose the Bill. But they ought to have realised that they were sacrificing for the larger interest of the country.<sup>67</sup>

Referring to unity of the Japanese, and initiative of the Samurais for reconstructing Japan on modern lines, he said in 1920 at Nasik —

"The unity of Japan was promoted when the Samurai class relinquished its dignity of birth. Is it not time that the Brahmins of our country follow them ? It is at least the duty of the Kshatriyas to help all in their onward march of progress. The sanctimony of birth which elevates the Brahmins above the rest of us can no longer

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66. Just as Kesari of Poona.

67. B.C.B., Op.cit., p. 62.

be celebrated. We must establish an equal start at birth for us all. To do away with the differential advantage which the Brahmins enjoy, we must no longer call them to officiate in religious ceremonies. Nor should listen to the professional Brahmins expounding the religious books or addressing his sermon, for they only serve to strengthen in us, the feelings of reverence which is inculcated in us and which is our duty to eradicate."<sup>68</sup>

Shahu had thus given his social philosophy as well as means just as the intercaste marriages, discontinuation of the religious ceremonies, stopping of the religious sermons, and regarding to oneself among the non-Brahmins not less than the Brahmins.

#### RELIGIOUS THOUGHTS

Basically Shahu Maharaja was a staunch Hindu and a worshiper of gods and goddesses. His daily routine was in fact to start with worship to God. But in the course of time, an evolutionary change had been witnessed in his mind and attitude. In a meeting at Nasik, as earlier cited, he had frankly confessed that "At one time, I confess, I was conservative."<sup>69</sup> A King and a conservative Hindu in Shahu, thus we see changed to make compromise with the new age of science and technology.

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68. B.C.B., Op.cit., p. 45.

69. Ibid., p. 43.

Religious thoughts naturally he had expressed, show a great march on the horizon of religious reforms in India. Although we see him carrying out in a day to day life, all the religious rituals and formalities, his actions and thoughts were rational and against conservative form of Hinduism. And no critic of him could, therefore, dare to call him anti-Hindu. What was strange to his critics and the Brahmins was his idea of egalitarian society. By religious life he did not mean hatred but a way to seek sublime excellence in life. In this regard once he told —

"Religion may be a matter of some concern from the stand-point of individual but it must never be a hitch in national life. The most commonly accepted definition of religion is that it is a path leading to the Almighty. But just as in most metropolitan cities there are various roads that lead us to the same point, similarly the same common object in view, if the similies be true that religions are but different roads that lead us to the same goal. One really wonders as to why people who have the same object in view namely to see God, should hate each other simply because owing to difference in circumstances they happened to choose the different path."<sup>70</sup>

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70. B.C.B., Op.cit., p. 60.

Speaking then about the origin of the religion he said -

"About the circumstances from which originated these diverse religions, one can only speculate. But since none can vouchsafe that he has reached God by following one particular religion it may be safely said that none has a right to plead dogmatically that his religion is the only true religion and that the rest are false. Mercy is the true basis of religion. Self centerism leads on to degradation, says the sage Kabir. Thus it follows that the true religion consists in serving your fellows and to find God in man and respect him. On this all religions agree. All preach that doing good to others is virtue and doing ill to others is sin. When there is thus an agreement on the fundamentals among the different religions it is really an error that their followers should hate one another."

Then citing the examples of secular wars which Akbar and great Shivaji fought or many Maratha and Rajput heros fought under their leadership, he drew attention to true essence of religions as -

"I have above indicated the true essence of religions, and I am convinced that a nation which acts up to it ensures its progress. But we who have served from all true essence of religions and instead of

respecting every human being as an image of God have declared a large portion of our common humanity lower than the brutes on the strength of the Poendo Shastras can never expect the Almighty to help us on no matter how hard we struggle to propitiate him by prayers, by sermons, reading the Pooranas or going on pilgrimage barefooted or by falling prostrate to him. We cannot win him by such false means. On the other hand we are sure to incur his displeasure. The only way to ingratiate ourselves into his favour is to treat his children with equality and fraternity."<sup>71</sup>

While attacking the Chaturvarnya system he rightly explained at the Kanpur Conference of the Kurmi Kshatriyas as-

"Caste system is based on birth i.e., those are Brahmins whose parents belonged to Brahmin caste. Except that no other man should be called Brahmin."

Thus he explained the process of all the castes in the Hindus and pointed out-

"this made a man in Hindus to be proud of not his skill but birth. Similarly to a new man it became difficult to become a Brahmin, Kshatriya, or a Vaishya. This system

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71. B.C.B., Op.Cit., pp.60-61.

had ruined the Hindus and one who reads History can well understand this fact. At the same time again, out of the four castes - varnas - five thousand castes were created. Due to this the social strength of the Hindus began to ruin. Every caste cut off dining and matrimonial relations with the other caste. At the time of atrocities on one caste, the other castes only saw the injustice but did not help and feel pity. In fact there is only one caste of all the human beings."<sup>72</sup>

Further he quoted the Shastras -

"Samān Prasavatmika Jati Nyayashastram"<sup>73</sup> -- and asked the Hindus to be aware that not only in Hinduism, but even in other religions there are divisions or the Varnas. Aryan race is not alone in India. In other countries there are also Aryans. But difference was this that their Varna or caste is changed in the life of a man only and does not depend upon the birth as we follow."<sup>74</sup>

While speaking on ancient religion of this country he told at Arya Samaj conference --

"The real nature of the Vedic religion was not clearly manifested owing to its being thickly encrusted. Ancient

72. Jadhao, B.B. - Op.cit., pp. 44-45.

73. Ibid., p. 45. "समान प्रसवात्मिका जाते // न्यायशास्त्रम्"

74. Jadhao, B.B. - Op.cit., p. 45.



truths could not be clearly perceived as the works of the Rishis were studied with the help of the commentaries and expositions of the cunning and hypocritical priests (Bhatjee) — Brahminhood which used to depend on deeds and merit become dependent upon birth."<sup>75</sup>

After admitting the importance of the British Rule in India, he said in the course of his talk that the British had given equal justice to all and taken the task of educating the masses as the Government's duty.<sup>76</sup> Without education, according to him, awakening of any kind among the masses was impossible. Education was basically needed to know one's own religion. But here in India, even today majority of the Hindus do not know what is actually written in their religious scriptures. This was not at all deserving merit to those who were the masters and protectors of religion. Shahu, therefore, wanted religious awakening among the masses and religious freedom to follow the way of worship. "In order to introduce true religious education"<sup>77</sup> he wanted help from Satya Shodhak Samaj and Arya Samaj or such other institutions. Thus he felt the need of religion and religious education to man.

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75. Latthe, A.B., Op.cit., Vol. II, p. 462.

76. Ibid., p. 463.

77. Ibid., p. 464.



CREATION OF KSHATRA JAGADGURU

To change traditional form of Hinduism was not an easy task. The priesthood of the Brahminical type is based on the idea of caste superiority. It presupposes the right of the Brahmin caste alone to control the socio-religious life of the Hindus. The high priest thus who became by birth, is called the Guru of all the Hindus. The Brahminical influence because of such concepts was a continuous process. Even the Satya Shodhak Samaj and the Arya Samaj failed to detach the people other than Brahmins from the Brahmin influence in day-to-day life. The movement of Mahatma Phuley was also a failure. The non-Brahmins did not stop inviting the Brahmins for performing religious rituals. Shahu Maharaja was much worried for this state of affairs among the non-Brahmins. He thought as Latthe had told "wrong notions about the Divine Nature are the basis of the credence which the popular mind attaches to such degrading teaching."<sup>78</sup> While accepting the "Challenge" of the wrath of God, the Maharaja said that God does not require worship, faith, and prayers. "He is not all powerful because He is a prisoner bound by his own laws. If God is all pervading and all present, why should He need a middle man or flattery, prayers and faith ? If He is all knowing and all embracing, how could you deceive Him ?" Pondering over this subject of endless interest he concluded -

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78. Latthe, A.B. Op.cit., Vol. II, p. 519.

"God requires good actions and not praise. The Revealed Books are a mere myth. The Christian belief, that a man is absolved from his sins by confessing to a priest is a belief. If God is one, how is it that His revealed word is so diverse and contained in so many inspired books ? Our own scriptures are full of immoral and obscene stories. Why should we take them as Scriptures ? The authors of books which have interposed go-between between men and God ought to be prosecuted for fraud."<sup>79</sup>

On 15th June 1920, he therefore, by an order discontinued traditional worship at the Palace by the Brahmins and started the same at the hands of the Marathas. The order contained the words--

"If our Gods are worshipped (for us) by the Brahmins, ourselves are held to be unfit to touch them. And they decide us to be sometimes Kshatriyas and sometimes Shudras. So (henceforth) all worship and the sixteen rites in the (old) Palace, New Palace, and the Chhatris (ancestral memorial temples) are to be performed at the hands of the Marathas."<sup>80</sup>

This was a thunderbolt of his long awaiting thoughts on Hinduism and the Brahminical influence over the commoners. His

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79. Latthe, A.B.,—Op.cit., Vol. II, pp. 519-520.

80. Ibid., p. 521.

order of the 15th June 1920, was purely private, but held the minds of the masses. The Brahmins in Kolhapur became worried and through their secret agency got published the substance of that order in papers like Loksangrah and Rajkaran. While writing, therefore, on July 15, 1920, the Maharaja wrote to a friend --

"The order was passed by me on the 26th June 1920 at about 3 p.m. on the station bungalow and was sent to my Khasgi office that same day. And it appeared verbatim in Loksangrah very shortly. In the first place the order is private one, addressed to my Khasgi Karbhari and concerns only the worship of my private family Gods. It is not a gazetted State Order. From this you will be able to see how their (Brahmins<sup>81</sup>) influence is working in my own camps and how there are traitors even in my own offices."<sup>82</sup>

The establishment of the Shivaji Kshatriya Vedic School was laid down on July 6, 1920. The curriculum included the Vedic Mantras, music, musical expositions of religion and education in the vernacular.<sup>83</sup> This had attracted the non-Brahmins from all over Maharashtra. Maratha priests produced at the Shivaji Vedic School were invited from the non-Brahmins of Poona, Nasik and Khandesh. The second need, other than providing

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81. My own addition.

82. Latthe, A.B., Op.cit., Vol. II, p. 523.

83. Ibid., p. 524.

priests to non-Brahmins was to give them their own caste Guru to free them from the Brahmins. This had created urgency for a High Priest of the Marathas and choice fell upon Sadashivrao Patil (of) Benadikar - a high class Maratha under-graduate who was reading in the Fergusson College, Poona. And he was placed on the headship of the Patagaon Math to become the High Priest of the Kshatriyas.

Soon after installation function of the Kshatra Jagadguru Shahu wrote him on the same day that is, on 24th January 1921 that -

Your Holiness should begin your work quickly. Please continue your studies in Philosophy. Your ideal ought to be to do away with all middlemen between God and man. It should not be like that of the other Swamis. Your objective should be the service of the country and of the people."<sup>84</sup>

The creation of this Kshatra Jagadguru was the set back to the Brahminical form of Hinduism. Shahu's faith in the Vedic thoughts was not against the creation of this Guru. What he wanted at any cost was the end of Brahminical influence. To that end, his step cannot be called wrong.

However when the whole world was under change, non-Brahmins

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84. Latthe, A.B. Op.cit., Vol. II, p. 526.

were changing and when Shahu himself adhered to principles of social equality and justice, the creation of the Kshatra Jagadguru was certainly a wrong step. If he would have followed the same way in respect of other non-Brahmin castes as he did for starting separate Hostels of each caste, the principle of equality would have been protected. There might be some ideas in this regard before him, but due to his untimely sudden death nothing is there on the record.

As a king he looked at all the religions with no prejudices. The Hindus, Christians, Mohamedans and all others received from him impartial and proper treatment. The Brahmins, due to this, however, were not happy and once complained to him against the Muslims. In regard to that letter as a King he had explained his stand in a letter to the Political Resident as —

"You know that I feed my horses, dogs, and the Zoo on beef. The Brahmins have taken advantage of this and have set up a rumour against me that I encourage mutton to be mixed up with beef and sold in the open markets, as I am inclined towards Christian notions. This is a dodge. They want to make the agitation something like that fat being mixed up with cartridges in 1857. I bring this to your notice and request you to inform Government of this. If not immediately some other time, it may be of use to Govt." <sup>85</sup>

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85. K.A.O., S.D.R., No. 12084 dated 10th July, 1920.

Further he says --

"When I first ordered Christians and others to be allowed in the schools, they had started a similar movement. But now they have given it up and taken this up. Only they are spreading this privately.

They had also applied to me for stopping the sale of beef in the market, but I told them, I cannot do it as I have got Christians, Mahars and Musalmans among my subjects. I must treat them all alike. I may as well stop ghee and milk being sold in the Bajar."

In the religious matter, thus his understanding was based on broad lines and human philosophy. What he opposed was the "religious bureaucracy"<sup>86</sup> of the Brahmins. "Religion" according to him,<sup>86</sup> can no longer be pleased as an obstacle in the way. It was in Mesopotamia that the Hindoos and Mohamedans fought shoulder to shoulder notwithstanding the religious differences ... It cannot be said that religion comes in the way of our country."<sup>87</sup>

Shahu had thus given his own philosophy of religion and suggested also some means and ways to eradicate casteism and to secure unity - integrity of all the Hindus. And the remedies he had suggested in his various speeches, actions and enactments

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86. Bhosale, S.S., Krantisukte, p. 14.

87. B.C.B. (Ed.), Op.cit., pp. 65-66.

can be given in brief as —

- 1) Casteism cannot be destroyed unless caste system is abolished. The State should be the agency to take drastic and severe actions against those who practice caste system. Laws<sup>88</sup> must be made to effect social justice and equality.
- 2) Freedom and facilities of education<sup>89</sup> to people of all castes.
- 3) Intercaste marriages between the Hindus just as he arranged Maratha-Dhanagar and Brahmin-British marriages.<sup>90</sup>
- 4) Freedom to read all Books on Religion.<sup>90A</sup>
- 5) Destruction of such matter from the Religious Books as preach that "Rama who won Parashuram was the Kshatriya and Parashuram a Brahmin — otherwise the strifes would go on as they were between Rama and Parashuram."<sup>91</sup>

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88. Shahu's Enactments and orders like -

- a) Abolition of Untouchability at the public places like public buildings, schools, public wells etc. Jadhao, B.B. Op.cit., Appendix II pp. 4 to 9.
- b) Abolition of Weth Virala - See K.S.G., 27th July, 1921.

89. Bhosale, S.S., Krantisukte, pp. 5-6.

90. Pawar, K.R., Bhagawan S.S.C.M.Y. Awatar, p. 129.

90A. Bhosale, S.S., : Krantisukte p. 6.

91. Ibid., p. 84.



- 6) Freedom to become priest as he made a Maratha man the Kshatra Jagad Guru.
- 7) Appeal to the Marathas and Brahmins to give up their respective castes and take initiative to seek religious unity through the destruction of caste system.
- 8) Reservations to weaker sections till they come up with higher castes.
- 9) High positions in political power <sup>to untouchables</sup> as he did give to D.S. Pawar in the Kolhapur Municipality.

#### POLITICAL THOUGHT

Shahu Maharaja thought of politics as the second wheel of social and political life of a country. Without two wheels, as a cart cannot move he felt the necessity of simultaneous growth and progress of social and political life of our country. He said, therefore, in this regard --

"Whether political reform should precede social reform is a dispute which is attended with more heat than light. The two are as closely connected as the wheels of a carriage. That you can never succeed in driving a carriage safely if it rests on one wheel only is a common sense fact. Those who plead for political reform only and pay no heed to social reform or deny its urgency give sufficient

reason to doubt their motives. It would not be a miss to call them crafty and cunning."<sup>92</sup>

Earlier in that speech he told —

"I am of opinion that the two wheels as well as the yoke of a cart must be strong and stable before we can expect it run its course smoothly".

He, therefore, instead of taking first interest in transfer of political power from the British, thought his duty to do away with all the drawbacks in our society. In fact transfer of power, without preparing our people to carry out Governmental responsibility was to be a farce of freedom and independence. The transfer of power he meant should not be only the change of masters from the Alien to Natives. He wanted a total change in the social and political understanding of our people. Political education cannot be given unless education and educational facilities are made available to the masses. Obligarchy of one native caste in the political matters was more dangerous to him than the British. His efforts, in regard to making masses wise through the spread of education certainly prove that he was bent upon giving political education to his subjects. The establishment of the Coronation Patil School in 1913 and conversion of the Kolhapur Municipality into a form of self-Government in 1920<sup>93</sup>, are the practical examples of his

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92. B.C.B., Op.cit., p. 51.

93. RGAK, for 1919-20, p. 48.

plans of giving political training to his people.

TRIBUTES TO BRITISH FOR INDIA'S UNITY

Before the British Empire in India, there was no political unity and oneness of the Indians. The various regional languages again had widened the gap between people in four corners of India. As a matter of fact the British Government and their language - English - had brought all Indian people and native states under one banner. Moreover, because of them only doors of education were opened to the masses. Rightly, therefore, he tributed the British at the Royal Colonial Institute in London referring to the gathering of the leading statesmen of India and Indian Princes that 'tonight is perhaps the first occasion in the annals of the British Empire on which units, from both have met together and felt at least we Indians feel that we all stand together as one indivisible body.'<sup>94</sup>

In 1905 while opening the Jain Boarding he said -

"I consider that the birth of Associations (the Southern Maratha Jain Association)<sup>95</sup> like this indicate unmistakably the direction of the powerful influences that have been

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94. B.C.B. Op.cit., p. 8.

95. On the initiative of the Maharaja, the association was formed to start the Jain Boarding for Jain students in Kolhapur.

working under the benign rule of the British Government. One of the beneficent results of that rule is the commencement of the emancipation of the backward classes from the intellectual and social thralldom to which they had been subjected from time immemorial and the tendencies that are the outcome of our contact with west are now here better illustrated than in such attempts of those communities to raise themselves."<sup>96</sup>

#### THE CHAMBER OF PRINCES

Shahu Maharaja took the initiative for the formation of the Princes' chamber. But the Principles he stressed of the representation and the welfare of the subjects in the native states were neglected at the Patiala draft. To show his unwillingness to join such a dictatorial stand he strongly explained --

"I am aware that sentiment, and want of a definite single criterion to fix the eligibility at are difficulties which we have to meet. But if our claim is to speak for one third of the area and one fourth of the population of this country, it is impossible to see why Princes with sovereign powers only should be the masters of the situation. This is the reversion of the principle of

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96. B.C.B., Op.cit., p. 9.

representation. Is the committee aware as to what states it will have to exclude ? It is an insult to the States so left out and I regret I have to say that the suggested method of composition will unfortunately be the beginning of the end of the Chamber before it is formed."<sup>97</sup>

Further appealing to the Princes for adopting the principle of equality at least among all the Princes of large and small sizes of States he said --

"The House of Lords does not make distinction between Dukes and Lords. The hereditary and created peers do sit together. In countries which have state Government, small and big states meet together. Prussia and other states can transact business together. I appeal most earnestly to my brother Princes and Chiefs to rise above sentiment and be equal to the occasion."<sup>98</sup>

This was how he was bringing unity among the Indian Princes and establishing the principle of representation.

#### ON NATIONAL ARMY

Shahu's political interests were varied and based on sound ideas of modern political thought and nationalism. It is a point of wonder, that a King of a district size principality

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97. B.C.S., Op.cit., p. 24.

98. Ibid., p. 25.

thought of the National Army for India.

A War Conference held in June 1918 at Bombay was to gather the support of the Native States and all people in the Bombay Presidency for the main cause of supporting the British Government in the Great War against Germany. In his speech of appeal to the people, however, to show himself shrewdly away from any thought against the British and show his loyalty he told in that conference —

"Questions like raising a national army had better be postponed till after the war. Some wanted to raise a battalion of their caste to render some help to Govt. The object was certainly laudable but they could hardly make up even a company. There is ample time after the war to think of this and perhaps even more important things."<sup>99</sup>

Then appealing to the fighting races of India he reminded

"I would seize this opportunity of appealing with all the earnestness I can command to fighting races of India. They should remember that on them mainly depends the future of this country. It is for them to uphold her past military traditions and of glory and preserve unfurnished her honour by deeds of valour and I feel confident they

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99. B.C.B., Op.cit., p. 27.

will not fail to do their part."<sup>100</sup>

Thus he had coined the idea of the National Army to India, and inspired the masses to dream of their own army like the British.

#### ON FREEDOM OR SWARAJYA

As a King of a princely State it was not expected of him to do something or join the struggle for Freedom in India. It was his nobility that he had helped the Indian Revolutionaries like Lokmanya Tilak,<sup>101</sup> although the latter was his personal enemy.

Generally, a King is an heir to Feudalism. Shahu Maharaja, however, by the time of introducing the Montagu Chelmsford Reforms seems to be completely changed from the form of feudalism to democratic form of Government. Like Mahatma Phuley, he had no fear of the British power. What for he was worried was the threldom of the Brahmins under which the non-Brahmins were living. Under the British the non-Brahmins for the first in the history of India got opportunities to get education and to make awakening among themselves. On many occasions he had, therefore, praised the British for their educational policy as well as generosity. On the occasion of the Shivaji Memorial at Poona, he, in his inaugural and welcome address to the Prince of

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100. B.C.B. Op.cit., p. 27.

101. Topkhane, V.D. Op.cit., p.

Wales, clearly told that -

"From the mythical times of Rama and even earlier, the doors of learning were closed to us till the advent of the British Raj. We owe to your Royal House an ever lasting gratitude for inaugurating a wise and liberal policy of throwing open to all alike the doors of knowledge and creating in us a sense of self-respect and a spirit of true citizenship which are the natural consequences of liberal education."<sup>102</sup>

Then having done full justice to the pious memory of Shivaji Chhatrapati, he reviewed the position of the Marathas under the British and said --

"It now (after the first World War<sup>103</sup>) rests with us to take full advantage of the educational opportunities and the equality which all peoples of whatever religion enjoy as their birth right under the paternal rule of our revered and beloved King Emperor. And now we must leave," turning to the Marathas, he said, "no stone unturned to fit ourselves for our place not only in the field (martial), but in the Council Chamber and to dedicate to the service of the Empire not only our sword but our pen."<sup>104</sup>

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102. Jadhao, B.B., Op.cit., p. 141.

103. My addition to give correct view of his speech.

104. Jadhao, B.B., Op.cit., p. 143.



Even with all such thoughts of the British praise and asking the Marathas to take benefit of the educational as well as other facilities under the British, his interest in the concept of freedom was not less than the others. Freedom is the natural desire of man. He was not against it. But Mahatma Phuley, Shahu Maharaja and even Dr. B.R. Ambedkar had, although they were born in three different periods, a common fear of Brahminical dominance. Basically to them, the British were nearer than the Brahmins, because it was only under the British that their people got educational and other concessions to seek humanhood. Therefore, their first task was to prepare their people first to *deserve* and then to *demand*. If all people in India would have been of equal standard of understanding their own problems, ninety years would have certainly not required after 1857 to expell the British from India. The works of Mahatma Phuley, Shahu and Dr. Ambedkar were to lay the foundation for freedom struggle. Without awakening in the non-Brahmins as these leaders did, inculcation of the idea of freedom struggle was impossible. This was not done by the Brahmins. Hence the National Congress lacked the cooperation and support of the masses till Mahatma Gandhi took charge of the Congress. Shahu Maharaja, through his speeches had in a way explained and answered very clearly about all doubts, against their movement and interest in freedom.

While speaking at the Maratha Education Conference in 1917, he said -

"At present the great cry is about Home Rule.<sup>105</sup> The question is whether we are fit for it. We do really wish to have Home Rule. It will give us what we may say 'life blood', but I may state it as my reasoned opinion that a time will come when we may have to break through the shackles of our present day caste system. I look forward to this result in the interest of our general moral and material progress. So long as we have caste feelings among ourselves, it will lead to the weakening of our cause. You will, I am sure, easily perceive that to do away with our internal dissensions and fit us for Home Rule, it is necessary that we must try our best to get rid of the evil of the caste system."<sup>106</sup>

Further in the same speech, after citing the example of the advancement of Japan, and touching to the idea of freedom - Swaraj he told (to) the non-Brahmins -

"For the present all that we have to do to attain our goal is to educate our people and thus prepare their minds. This is the only way to approach this important and momentous question."

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105. Home Rule meant Swaraj.

106. a) Jadho, B.B., Op.cit., p. 3.

b) Latthe, A.B., Op.cit., Vol. II, p. 494.

Then making it clear that he was not against Swaraj or Home Rule, in the course of the same speech he observed -

"If castes remain as they are, Home Rule in the sense in which it is meant, will result in nothing but a kind of oligarchy. This of course does not mean, I may tell once more that I am against Home Rule. Surely we want it. Under the present circumstances, however, we must have the protection and guidance of the British until the evil of caste system becomes ineffective."<sup>107</sup>

Thus we see that all the while the non-Brahmins in those days feared not to the alien power - the British Government - but the native one - the Brahmins. It is a tragedy again that throughout the struggle of the non-Brahmins, from Mahatma Phuley to Shahu and Dr. Ambedkar, no Brahmin leader had come forward to assure them of ending the Brahminical influence over them. How and in what manner then the non-Brahmins should feel safe from the Brahmins ? Certainly, if this would have been done before Gandhiji's arrival on the political stage of India, masses in our country would have come under one banner with decisive force of united strength against the British. Shahu cannot be blamed, therefore, for his direct non-cooperation in the struggle for freedom.

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107. Latthe, A.B., Op.cit., Vol. II, p. 494.

In fact he was in a hurry to seek self-Government. He wanted from the earliest, that the non-Brahmins should be prepared to take their share equal to the Brahmins in all spheres of life. In Nasik speech he had opened his mind thus -

"You will, no doubt, understand that my efforts after education are motivated solely because I am most anxious to give self-government as early as possible to my subjects."<sup>108</sup>

Shahu's follower and a trustworthy official A.B. Latthe had published a booklet in 1912 bearing the title "The Ideal of Swaraj."<sup>109</sup> It is not true, therefore, that Shahu and the leaders of the non-Brahmins did not realise the importance of the Freedom Movement under the leadership of Lokmanya Tilak. Latthe had well described thoroughly the pros and cons of "Swarajya or Political autonomy" and "Self-Government on colonial lines."<sup>110</sup>

After giving a complete account of the caste strifes and the Brahmin dominance even after the Peshwa period, he - Latthe told about his times -

"Under ordinary circumstances the competition of

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108. B.C.B. (Ed.), Op.cit., p. 49.

109. Latthe, A.B., The Ideal of Swarajya  
Mission Press, Kolhapur, 1912.

110. Ibid., p. 1.

two candidates (in Europe) is based on difference of some political principles. But here in India it is not very rare to see that men who have been comrades on the same platform for years and years break away into rivals only to seek entrance into the Council of a Province."<sup>111</sup>

Then summing up his thoughts he appealed even before the First World War and the Montagu Chelmsford Reforms that —

"It is hoped our readers have by this time realised the difficulties which have to be faced before we can claim to anything like representative government. Political institutions are only one aspect of the one whole social life of a nation. If those institutions are to approach those in the west, then the social life in India must essentially conform to the Western ideals of life in all its branches. History as well as contemporary events abundantly prove that the Indian ideals are radically opposed to democratic rule. Whether they are superior or inferior to the Western, is a different question and may be answered in any way one pleases. But it is a mistake to deny that anything that has taken place in recent times has not been powerful enough to modify the "unchanging life of India as a

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111. Latthe, A.B., The Ideal of Swarajya

Mission Press, Kolhapur, 1912 p. 16.

whole, so as to make it better adopted to the struggles and advantages of British or American political life."<sup>112</sup>

Shahu and his followers or co-workers thus from quite earlier, to the announcement of the Montagu Chelmsford Reforms had thoroughly thought of the idea of complete freedom - Swarajya and dominian status or self-Government also. The Montagu Announcement gave them a chance to mobilise their force, but the real movement of awakening the non-Brahmins for their political privileges was already started.

Shahu's idea of freedom absorbed all the people in India including the Brahmins. On the one hand he was advising the untouchables<sup>113</sup> to start their struggle for elevating their depressed conditions, as well as seek the benefits of the principle of equality, liberty and fraternity under the British Government and on the other, he was saying, "I could not look upon the devolution of political power as safe before the voters of all castes were educated enough to understand their civil rights."<sup>114</sup> By both thus he was primarily concerned to freedom for all. Brahmins in India of his time, were well educated. He did not worry of them. He was worried, therefore, about the non-Brahmins because

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112. Latthe, A.B., The Ideal of Swarajya

Mission Press, Kolhapur, 1912 p. 16.

113. B.C.B. (Ed.) Op.cit., p. 53.

114. Ibid., p. 48.

they were neither taught nor preached to enjoy political power. He rightly, therefore told :-

"In this country of ours, where the reign of castes has a powerful sway on the minds of the people and where 70 to 80 per cent are illprepared to understand exercise their rights and duties I venture to say that political power will fall into the hands of a single caste."<sup>115</sup>

In support of his statement he had explained the background of the social history of India right from the struggle between the Arya and Anaryas to the recent one under the Peshwas. Then firmly opposing any move of transfer of power to the Brahmins and showing the remedies to foster the cause of freedom movements he (told) :-

"I disapprove of the transfer of power from the hands of the British into the hands of such a small community as the Brahmins. Do not be blind to our social history."<sup>116</sup>

Really, the days of Shahu Maharaja were not ripen to enjoy the freedom from all bondage. Our caste struggles and religious disunity were so strong and powerful although all the Hindus of different castes were living in one nation.

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115. B.C.B. (Ed.) Op.cit., p. 48.

116. Ibid., p. 49.

Casteism and pride for one's own religion partitioned India and even after 1947, various castes among the Hindus, instead of moving towards unity, maintain proudly their identities.

ON MONTAGU CHELMSFORD REFORMS

Referring to the Montagu Chelmsford Reforms in the tense of the strife between the Brahmins and non-Brahmins, Shahu Maharaja observed -

"By the new reform act, the political power in British Districts will be divided between the civil service and the representatives of the people and it is provided that the power kept in the hands of the civil service will gradually pass in the hands of the representatives of the people. I am afraid, such a diarchical system of Government will be ill-suited to the condition peculiar to the Native States. There the power will be divided between the subjects, the civil services, the Ruler and British Government. It would not do to divide power among these and let it pass gradually into the hands of the people."<sup>117</sup>

In his personal outlook, the policy which he adopted was not supporting the form of feudalism. Indian situation based on the caste system was entirely different from that of the

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117. B.C.B. (Ed.) ~ Op.cit., p. 50



European life. The term feudalism used in connection with the European atmosphere cannot be applied to Indian form. Here, instead of landed property, religious privileges played very decisive role to keep under control the masses. The word "Religious Bureaucracy"<sup>118</sup> is quite appropriately used by him to describe the state of affairs in Indian feudalism. Even though he was a King, from his statements, it is evident that he feared no more for his own crown or kingdom. Many times he had expressed his desire also to give up the responsibility of the State<sup>119</sup> and to seek retirement. Unless educational facilities and political education were provided to the masses, transfer of power was not going to solve nation's problems. Even in the Princely States, condition of the people was not different from the situation in British India. Shahu Maharaja clarified his stand as -

"I am desirous of entrusting my people with full and complete power as soon as they are advanced to understand its exercise. Till they grow up to this stage I feel great anxiety in handing over any political power for it may be monopolized by the few to the disadvantage of the many."<sup>120</sup>

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118. Bhosale, S.S., Krantisukte, p. 17.

119. B.C.B., Op.cit., p. 50.

120. Ibid., p. 51.

However, a scheme like dominion status or the self-Government was not workable in the princely states. Because the "subjects" as he understood of the Native State "were to be responsible to the British and not to their respective rulers. By that, indirectly all princely states were to go under the British. This, according to him, was not to solve the problem of the masses. "When the subjects are in possession of complete self-Government, the ruler can but be its guide."<sup>121</sup>

Right to vote means a right either to continue or change a Government. This right naturally must be used very carefully and consciously. Advising the non-Brahmins in that respect he warned --

"Under the New Reforms Act, many of you enjoy the privilege of voting. I hope you will wisely take full advantage of the New Reforms that have been granted to us by our kind Government and of the channel that has been opened of self-Government for uplifting ourselves politically, socially, economically and morally."<sup>122</sup>

#### IDEA OF WELFARE STATE

The Maharaja was quite aware of the new concepts of welfare state in Modern times. "No cake to a few until all are served with bread"<sup>123</sup> was the policy of the English Labour Party

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121. B.C.B. Op.cit., p. 51.

122. Ibid., p. 70.

123. Ibid., p. 49.

in England, and he had stressed this policy throughout his own life to seek welfare of the Kolhapur people and wished the same of the masses in India. In a speech he had explained —

"In India 90 are starving while 10 are feasting. Those who urge that ghee be provided to those who are feasting before any condiments are served to those who are starving strangely betray their anxiety for the masses. I fell to understand how people are not ashamed to an expression to such damnable utterances in papers and in the public that Legislative Councils are no places for the farmers to show their skill in ploughing."<sup>124</sup>

The above statement is an important piece of truth to know the idea of a welfare of state that the Maharaja had held in his mind. His whole career as the Chhatrapati and <sup>a</sup> good wisher of the society really would honour him as a forerunner of the idea of a welfare State in India. Further, while stressing the point of national character he advised that --

"The political destiny of any country depends upon the character of the people in that country. Therefore supreme attempts should be made for building up the character especially of our youths and prove ourselves

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124. a) B.C.B.,-Op.cit., p. 49.

b) This statement was against Lokmanya Tilak and his 'Kesari' as Tilak in his Athani speech said in 1920 that the election is not the job of the Telis, Tambolis and farmers. Do they go to do their respective traditional work in the Assembly ? Pl. see Thakare, Prabodhankar, Shetakaryache Swarajya, p. 113.

deserving of the new rights that have been bestowed upon us."<sup>125</sup>

Referring then to the work he had done in Kolhapur he said --

"The Brahmin community is considerably perturbed to find matriculated Mahars and Mangs forcing their entry into the higher occupation which were hitherto closed against them. They would have felt nothing wrong if the Mahars and Mangs had been Christians."<sup>126</sup>

Pointing out then the situation in other princely states he continued --

"Most of the Native States confer diplomas on candidates of higher communities who are much below the Mahars, Mangs, whom I turned Vakils in point of education. But I have never heard any one complaining, such an act. My main object in giving these diplomas was to open the legal occupation to the untouchable community which by force of custom was hitherto closed against adverse circumstances. My experience as a sportsman", <sup>h</sup>~~fur~~~~ter~~ he said, "tells me that a horse drinks only when he is shown the water."

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125. B.C.B., Op.cit., p. 70.

126. Ibid., p. 64.

And showing trust in his people of Kolhapur he concluded at Nasik -

"It augers well for the future that notwithstanding such leaders the Hindu society is gradually losing its faith in untouchability and my subjects will deserve self-Government to the extent to which they show themselves prepared to treat one another with brotherly feeling."<sup>127</sup>

#### NOT AGAINST THE BRAHMINS

Generally it was believed that Shahu Maharaja was against the Brahmins. As Bhaskarrao Jadhao's words are reproduced by Bhai Madhavrao Bagal, that in haste or hatred the Maharaja never revenged the Brahmins either removing them from the services or by any other act.<sup>128</sup>

Till the end of his life, Brahmins in Kolhapur as well as in Maharashtra as a whole never had come to any compromise on the social issue. And all that the Maharaja opposed to the Brahmins was their social and religious policy and outlook. But to the Brahmins, these attacks of him were very much severe because firstly they were never before attacked by a King for their high social status, secondly idea of equality was not

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127. B.C.B.,—Op.cit., p. 57.

128. Bagal, Madhavrao,—Shri Shahu Maharaja Yanchya Athavani, p. 6.

acceptable to them, and thirdly Shahu's stand of bringing up all the non-Brahmins equal to the status of the Brahmins was taken up by them as a challenge. Because of this, their wraths and intrigues crossed the limit of their general tactics and they did many unwanted things against him. The Maharaja, therefore, in 1921 complained -

"The mean tricks of my opponents are beyond imagination. A few days back my legal Adviser was robbed of his trunk on the Poona Station. A man in ticket collector's dress openly came and removed passengers. Fortunately no important papers were lost."<sup>129</sup>

A.B. Latthe had also told that "More important than the theft of notes whose worst use was under publication in the Press or the attempted extraction of confidential documents from the trunk of a State servant, some of his State Records were found to have been tampered with by Brahmin officers who had managed to enjoy his confidence for some years past."<sup>130</sup> As a policy again, no rule was laid down in the Kolhapur State to prohibit religious life of the Brahmins. The non-Brahmin movement was to seek progress of the non-Brahmins and not to create hatred between two groups of the

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129. Latthe, A.B., Op.cit., Vol. II, p. 593.

130. Ibid.,

Hindus. He had explained in short in regard to his Brahmin policy as -

"My efforts for the elevation of the other communities would be improper to interpret as a reflex of the jealousy of the Brahmins. Many of my trustworthy officers and advisers are Brahmins. My Brahmins enjoy Inams from me. I am sure, my Brahmin subjects will testify that I have not neglected their interest."<sup>131</sup>

This is sufficient to prove that as a King as well as a social revolutionary in Modern India, he had made sincere efforts to give a hand to those who were backward and seek harmonious growth of our society towards the march of equality. In brief his idea of a welfare State and a society was like the one of Shivaji Chhatrapati. Once he himself said of this that -

"If all agree that there is some sense in the procedure of doctors and lady doctors to give more nourishing food to the weak and the sickly child so that he may come to be in a line with the robust. I don't see why I should be blamed for applying it in the case of the untouchables. Some Poonaites allege that I have adopted this discrimination as a convenient

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131. Latthe, A.B., Op.cit., Vol. II, p. 57.

means for advancing the cause of my community. I deny it as a false allegation. I swear that I will never do anything disgraceful to the line established by the Maharaja Shivaji."<sup>132</sup>

I have no words to comment upon this right forward policy of Shahu Maharaja which sought the well-being of all the people irrespective of their castes.

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132. Latthe, A.B., Op.cit., Vol. II, p. 57.



## CHAPTER - VII

### AN ESTIMATE

In this study an endeavour is made to bring in relief, the role of Shahu Chhatrapati of Kolhapur as a King and a Social Revolutionary in the Modern Times. Today, Kingship is an outdated form and work of a social revolutionary, a need of times. Shahu's contributions as shown in the preceding chapters cannot be denied as well as neglected. Even if one forgets his role as a king, his other role which is emphasised, as a social revolutionary is going to remain ever lasting. History cannot neglect a king like him who had contributed richly towards the progress of the society of his time.

A Character in History, however, needs a critical and analytical examination of its whole career howsoever enviable it might be. In that respect, Shahu's life was divided into two clear cut roles, first being the king and the second, the social revolutionary. But these two roles and other manifold activities of him as S.M.Fraser had pointed out were aimed "at two connected objects - the education of the masses and the breaking down of the barriers between man and man created by caste".<sup>1</sup> And both of his roles were complementary to one another so far his aim was concerned.

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1. Latthe, A.B., - Op.cit., Vol.I., Preface, P. V.

In fact, kingship is and was a trust. All honours and titles a king bears are not always of his, but his subjects. In the Kolhapur Chhatrapati House, no eminent ruler was born to imprint his career as benevolent and worthy ruler. Instead, the Chhatrapatis of Kolhapur were tools in the hands of their commanders and administrators. After British penetration, the British Political Agents and administrators behaved as if they were the masters. To rule Kolhapur State was not an easy task, although the Chhatrapati was the real master. Against this background, while summing up Shahu's success S.M. Fraser had stated that- "Shivaji the Great built up the Maratha nation". Similarly Shahu "re-established in no small measure the old-authority, social and religious which attached to the ancient conception of Kshatriya kingship in a State where the prestige of the rulers had fallen low during a long succession of minorities."<sup>2</sup>

Primary duties of Shahu, were to see his State Administration working properly and on the lines he wanted. As an administrator he had to deal with first the British Bureaucrats. The second community which made hindrance in his way - in the State affairs as well as in the social and religious spheres in which progress was aimed at was the Brahmins. To make a headway through these hindrances he had taken measures which

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2. Ibid., Op.cit., P.Preface. III.

were possible for him. In a "tiny little Kingdom" like Kolhapur, enforcement of law or introduction of new enactments was a difficult task. At any time against any law unacceptable to the Brahmins, the tension - so also dissension in the administrative set up was possible. And their complaints to the British against him, or disfavour of the Political Agent, were to create detrimental atmosphere to injure his power as well as personal life. He had to sail through such troubled waters throughout his life. His lieutenants Bapusaheb Ghatage - his brother, Babasaheb Khanvilkar - brother-in-law, Diwan Sabnis, high officials like Bhaskarrao Jadhao, Dajirao Vichare, A.B.Latthe, who assisted him in his administrative and social work had proved a great asset to him. But his was the sole move to face successfully all the critical and difficult situations. To remain honest to his views that he was the first servant of the people in his State, he had to go very cautiously with his plans and programmes trying his best not to harm the feelings of any one. Justice Vaidya had correctly reviewed his administrative career as :

"Though he was a ruler, he thought that his duty was to serve the people in the State. In every thing that he did, we find - 1) a great deal of thought; 2) energy and firmness; 3) Systematic planning; 4) realism and appreciation of facts; 5) Application of mind to minutest details of administration; 6) Rare combination of dignity and informality (he was reserved and aloof at times, but always accessible to the needy)

and 7) responsiveness to peoples' needs." He and his other administrators "ran the administration which was characterized by its integrity, system, energy, realisation of facts, and due responsibility for the people. The Maharaja imbibed these ideas from his vast reading and observations. Although the administration was not democratic in form, it was democratic in substance."<sup>3</sup>

But Justice Vaidya did not pay necessary attention to Shahu's administrative work. This aspect of his life, the Justice told, is not "important to us today".<sup>4</sup> May not be it on the ground that he was a king. But the idea of a welfare state and the plans and programmes so also the enactments he had introduced and carried out to enhance his State Power for doing good to the people cannot be neglected. In fact, any thought, idea or a programme in any form of Government which seek benefit of people must be accepted by all. In this regard Shahu's contribution is unprecedented, at least in the Marathi land.

In the history of the Chhatrapatis, Shahu seems to be the first, after Shivaji Chhatrapati, the founder of the House, who had utilised and mobilised all resources of his State for the upliftment of his subjects. To know the grievances and difficulties of the masses, right from the first year of his career he had adopted his own methods. His tours and hunts in

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3. Vaidya, Justice G.N., - Op.cit., P.54.

4. Ibid.

the interior parts of his State were the unique means to -  
the King and his subject/ to know each other as well as to find  
out the ill-behaviour of administrative staff. From morning to  
evening he was ever busy in official work, discussing state  
problems with high officials, consulting his advisers and Chief  
Justice, finding out faults and errors of the bureaucrats, guiding  
the secretariat, meeting with the visitors, suggesting plans  
for arranging social-educational programmes and institutions  
and so on. His daily schedule was full of engagements. All the  
while he was seen working for his people and absorbed into the  
thought of uplifting the masses. Such a patriot type ruler of  
this country was unprecedented in many respects. To understand  
him in proper perspective, therefore, some of his noble quali-  
ties which have been described in the preceding chapters are  
summed up below :

#### SIMPLICITY IN PERSONAL LIFE

In the annals of the history of Indian Kings, rare  
accounts are there of a king's simplicity. And that too were  
motivated by some religious ideas and whims. Mythical story  
of King Harishchandra was garbed by religious fancies, and was  
not a deliberate attempt to give up the Royal splendour. Shahu's  
simplicity was natural. It is not correctly explained by his  
biographers as to why and how he turned to be a simple one in  
his personal life. A prince, brought up in the European  
atmosphere and taught<sup>5</sup> to behave at every moment as the Master

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5. Omvedt Gail., - Op.cit., P.124.

and King of his subjects had lived the most ordinary life as if he was a farmer. For instance the following example is worth to reveal the secret of his simplicity -

In the days of winter, he used to wear in his bed a rough~~x~~ blanket known as Ghongadi which is ordinarily used by most of the farmers in Maharashtra. There was no privacy in his life. He used to sleep in the open camp and not in the palace. Free access was there for his trustworthy followers, officials and commoners. Naturally at any time before his going to bed, one could go and see him. Once in the days of winter, the new Kshatra Jagad Guru wanted to see him and surprised to see him wrapped into a Ghongadi on his cot. The Jagad Guru could not comment, but laughed in secret. The Maharaja understood the meaning of his laugh and said -

" Is it the matter of laugh ? This (the Ghongadi) is the real great cotton-Mahavastra of the Marathas. Today on Rayagad, tommorrow on Panhala and day after tomorrow on Rangana was the life in the time of Shivaji, the Great. How it could have been possible to make arrangements on every fort of bed for royal persons in that time ? On ordinary wooden cot-Khatale, they used to spread Ghongadi and that was throne i.e. - Sinhasan of the Chhatrapati. Besides, this throne created by the Mavales - the ordinary Marathas and Ghongadi users. Why do then we feel ashamed of using this Ghongadi."<sup>6</sup>

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6. Naik, T.B., : Op.cit., P.125.

Thus, the Maharaja was living the life of a commoner. And it was not after starting of the Satya Shodhak or Arya Samaj movement but from the beginning of his royal career. Secondly, in the great bubonic plague of 1898-99, he used to visit the Plague Camps regularly. He used to drive his Ratha - the Victoria and used to go by it every day. Darbar Surgeon and Medical officers were to go with him. Once it was so happened that one day on his midway to Kolhapur, he saw a farmer with a blanketful carrots wrapped in a Ghongadi and intended to present them for the Maharaja. Immediately, the Victoria was stopped. Shahu came down out of it, went nearby a tree, sat under it after spreading on earth the Ghongadi and began to eat the carrots as many as he could. A Doctor interrupted him saying "Maharaj, you are Chhatrapati, so Great ! After eating one or two carrots, the farmer might have been satisfied, but you did not stop. Carrot is detrimental to your health." Even then the Maharaja continued to eat. Then he moved to Kolhapur asking the farmer to see him at Kolhapur.

And at the time of dinner, the Maharaja ate again the Dangar-Bhakari.<sup>7</sup> Then in the plague camp the Doctors had arranged a feast for the Maharaja. To see that, the noble Chhatrapati said -- " To prepare this feast, how many poor people are harassed ? You see, Doctor, think over the matter, the King, going nearby a farm was seen by the farmer, with affection and love, offered his carrots and bread-Dangar Bhakari.

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7. Regular food of farmers.

I accepted them as articles of trust. My hunger is over.

Even then I share you as a formality. But let me know whether the feast prepared out of harass-ment of poor people is more tasty than the kind of gift of carrots and bread of the farmer?"<sup>8</sup>

Many incidences, events and places are there to show the simplicity of Shahu Maharaja. Rightly therefore he was called the King of the commoners - Lok Raja.

His simplicity in personal life and personal contacts with the masses, did not mean that he did not behave like a King and lacked the qualities of an administrator. He had before him the ideal of the Maratha State which Shivaji Chhatrapati established to seek the welfare of the masses. Purposely he behaved as a commoner and that way of him did not disown his crown.

As an administrator of first rate calibre and a benevolent King, he had played very important and constructive role. On his first royal tour, he granted a permission, on the spot for opening a girls school at Gargoti, and discussed with the prisoners their problems but as an administrator only after having complete knowledge as well as pros and cons of the issue, he had ordered his judges to submit monthly statements of prisoners' accounts with all the necessary details as the date of arrest, period of remand, framing of the charge sheet, opening of the case etc.<sup>8</sup> At all the crucial times in the

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8. Naik, T.B., - Op.cit., PP.127-128.

9. RGAK., For 1895-96, Ch.I, P.6.



State Administration he had not forced his opinion but as a prudent administrator made officials to work not for the sake of salary of the Maharaja only, but for the rayat on whose money Government was run. He put all progressive ideas into practice as soon as he assumed powers. He tried to remove all drawbacks in the administration and stopped corrupt practices. So also he saw the things done properly and watched the activities of the bureaucrats. In his boyhood, he saw his father deceived by the cunning servants.<sup>10</sup> Because of that remembrance he always remained alert and attentive about the work of officials. He did not like that official should take disadvantage of his trust. Similarly he wanted that no member from Royal family and relatives should take disadvantage of his position.<sup>11</sup>

Sometimes he adopted devices to make the servants work carefully. For instance once without notice he entered the office of the Prime Minister - his Diwan and saw many clerks slept-railing to a long bolster. Instead of punishing them on the spot he used a trick to make them work, replacing Lods by wooden tables and stools.<sup>12</sup>

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10. Bagal, Madhavrao, - Shri Shahu M.Y. Athavani, P.6

11. Once after coming from city, Mamasahab Khanvilkar, his brother-in-law, asked a State servant in the palace to take off his shoes. And as soon as the servant refused to follow, he beat him. Immediately the servant approached the Maharaja, described the incidence to him and intended to resign. On the spot then, to encourage the self-respect in that servant, Shahu Maharaja ordered to give that servant, promotion and scolded his brother-in-law for asking a State servant to do his personal work. See Ibid P. 33.

12. Ibid., P.88.

In judicial, revenue and educational matters he had taken keen interests and made drastic changes to suit his laws to the modern period. No field of modern welfare state remained under him untouched. He was in fact, not only the patron of art, culture and literature but in many of the fields he had himself taken the initiative to start such things in Kolhapur. He took initiative to settle down the native play-makers and dancers who are known as Mang Garudi.<sup>13</sup> And after testing their honesty and capacity to work, Shahu Maharaja appointed them as Night Watchmen in the State service and assigned to them a great responsibility.<sup>14</sup> This event had gone in the history of India, as a unique, as never before these people were employed in a service of a State.

As a king Shahu was a versatile genius and patron of all cultural activities. He himself was interested in many arts and exhibited his own skills in riding, wrestling and in other arts also. During his time hunting, wrestling, shooting, riding, so also music, drama, painting, and many other items of art were patronised and flourished. Because of him only, Kolhapur became the birth place of Cine Industry in 1913.<sup>15</sup>

Naturally all the arts turned the minds of Kolhapur people

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13. Mang Garudis were wandering tribes and earned their bread only by playing and dancing on a rope hanged high up from the earth on two pillars, beating drums, and exhibiting feats in physical exercises. They had no homes and no properties. They were never treated as honest and worthy to do a job as other men do.

14. Topkhane, V.D., - Op.cit. PP.5-6

15. Mujawar, Isaq., - Maharashtra, the Birth Place of Cine Industry, P.13.

towards modernity and new life in the present age. It had indirectly hammered the dogmatic life in society. Artists and players belonging to many castes began to come together to create social harmony and affinity.

Shahu Maharaja had, thus from every point of view, tried his best to change the old tone of Kolhapur, for accepting the new values of social life. As a King he had taken all possible steps to change radically the whole society. His radical and revolutionary speeches which he delivered at the State functions and on important occasions hammered brains of old elite class as well as illiterate masses as if a plough, to cultivate the seeds of modern age, based on social justice and equality. Under him, whole administrative machinery in the State, was turned to work on the line of missionary zeal with a view - pious and prime important, that it was the messenger of a new age of Social Democracy. His contributions thus, to present Age, as a king, were not less than a Social Revolutionary of his time in India.

#### AS A SOCIAL REVOLUTIONARY

As a king and an administrator, Shahu's place in the history of modern Maharashtra as well as in the history of the Marathas was next to that of Shivaji Chhatrapati. Only one thing which he lacked was the fighting zeal and titles in the actual wars. But that was not his fault. In fact, the times were changed. No Native Ruler was permitted to exhibit his

military valour. If that would have been there, Shahu certainly would have shown his extraordinary ~~feats~~ and skills in the art of fighting. His gigantic masculine figure of 6' 10" in height, constantly maintained physique and sound health on regular exercises, so also the courage to catch with bare hands, tigers and bears, would have surely <sup>been</sup> gone in the history of military warlords as unique ~~feats~~ and unaccountable valours. <sup>16A</sup> Rightly therefore, the Kesari - "the Brahmin organ of Tilak party in Poona" - after his death commented -

" In matters of physical strength he had special gifts from Providence. Probably there was no other Ruler in the whole of India who would be compared with him in this respect". Further the paper continued, "The powers of his intellect were similarly great, and there is no doubt that if he had been born in older days, the organising skill which was the peculiarity of his intellect would have enabled him to accomplish what would have given him a historic fame. Man is apt to look upon his own age as uninteresting and tasteless. But there is no doubt that a work correctly describing the extraordinary achievements, direct or indirect, in the open and behind the curtain of his intellect, his knowledge of human nature and his strong ambition will be a very interesting work indeed." Then while describing the work and intellect of Shahu Maharaja the Kesari, which was then also

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16A. Kesari dated 7th May 1922.

Translation by Latthe, A.B., see Op.cit. Vol. II, PP. 609-690.

the number one critic of him wrote -

"None else in the present age had probably moved the soil of the earth so deeply as Shahu Maharaja by driving the plough of his all-round intellect into religion, politics and sociology and driving it with all his authority. The people are already seeing what is the result of all his efforts but it is as true that an intellectual awakening has taken place among many side-tracked classes of men who found in him a unique leader as it is also true that the Maharaja's indefatigable energy, his perservance and his power to concentrate all his energies on the ~~and~~ achievement of his goal was extraordinary. The Maharaja had provided in his life ample material suggestive of many unknown laws in the science of the human mind."<sup>16B</sup>

Shahu Maharaja had thus even after being a King tried his best to live as simple as possible and to do every possible thing in his hand and power to ameliorate the masses towards new world of democracy based on brotherhood. However in his life time, his work of social, political, and religious reforms was badly criticised by his opponents like Lokmanya Tilam, Vijapurkar, N.C.Kelkar, Damle, the editor of Rajkaran<sup>17</sup> and many more conservative Brahmins in Maharashtra. Except the traditional and specially conservative Brahmins, it seems, no critic was there to point out mistakes and drawbacks of the Maharaja.

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16B. Ibid.

17. Jadhao, B.B.- Op.cit., P.77.

After all he was a human being. One should not think that no mistakes were committed by him. But it's wonder that all the criticism and bad labels stuck to him were only because of his policies concerning the upliftment of non-brahmins. And no Brahmin critic till this day had pointed out his loopholes in the administration, mistakes in the day-to-day routine, and drawbacks in personal or private life.<sup>18</sup>

This is not the place to discuss in detail, the private life of Shahu Chhatrapati, an incidence which created doubts ~~also~~ and rumours about him in Marathi land, is taken up for an example. Of course, the incidence which is being explained was not only one in his life. But as Keer has pointed out that it was second plot<sup>19</sup> hatched against him, it bears more importance. - About the time of 1906, the year in which the Brahmin party was deafeed on account of the matters that 1) Rajopadhye Inam was abolished 2) Shankaracharya had to accept Shahu as the Kshatriya and, 3) Lokmanya was sentenced in the Tai Maharaja case. One Kaka Master<sup>20</sup> wrote a letter to Bombay Government

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18. Bhide, G.R., - Kolhapur Darshan, P. 352

Its pity that scholars and literary personalities like the late N.S. Phadake, an eminent Marathi writer had hurled mud on Shahu without going through all necessary evidences. It is at the same time not correct to hold him leading life of a saint. As the late P.C. Patil had told, "He was a king. To kings generally, besides their married wives, had one or two concubines. Unless some are forced for illegal or immoral means no crime or offence takes place." Further he stated that "In case of kings some matters were pardonable". True to this content, the history of Kings in India is open to us as to know that many poor so also some shrewd people offered beautiful damsels and even married women to kings. In fact an act of refusing such offers, was an insult.

See- for the statement of N.S. Phadake, "Kolhapur Darshan" P. and for P.C. Patil's statement see his book- "Mazya Athavani" P. 262.

19. Keer, Dhananjay, - Shahu Chhatrapati, P. 159.

20. Not original name of a man in Kolhapur, but adopted one as pen name while writing letters

against the Maharaja, charging him that he had forcibly seduced three women. Then an anonymous letter was again sent to the Bombay Government with the same charge. And this matter was brought to the notice of the Maharaja by Col. Ferris, the Political Agent in their private conversation. However ~~even~~ even after receiving such letters, Bombay Government<sup>21</sup> did not take any action. The Maharaja, therefore, thought to do away all those bogus charges requesting personally the Viceroy to make inquiries into the matter. Bombay Government was not of this opinion. Shahu felt the situation rather obliging to him. He could not tolerate the matter and wrote to Col. Faris on 7th August 1906, that - " though the letter is anonymous, you should kindly go to the bottom of the matter. It is of course beyond doubt that it is the work of my enemy". Further he said, "I have, therefore, to request you kindly to make searching inquiry into the matter. I am not one of those who think that such inquiry will take away my (abru) reputation. You know Professor Vijapurkar, Rashingkar, Tilak and other editors of the native news-papers who are my enemies and I do not mind if ever they were allowed to help the inquiry. If you do not want to have an inquiry, you might ask them privately about the truth. You can even privately or publicly ask the guardians of the ladies."<sup>22</sup> Further very boldly the Maharaja continued -- " If my enemy Tilak and his party whom I have

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21. This was surprising because in those days the influence of the era of Lord Curzon was still in existence. However, as truth was siding the Maharaja, nothing happened wrong.

22. KAO., SDR., No.15, L.Nos.2856-57 dated August 7, 1906.

mentioned above say that my absence from here is necessary for the purposes, I should not mind going away for some time for a trip. But my only request is that if after all inquiries the charges should prove quite unfounded, the persons of the Tilak party who made the charges should be dealt for the charges according to deserts."

Then he confidently asked not only to inquire into this one incidence but into all charges against him as -

" I challenge any of the above mentioned people who are at the bottom of it, to prove these charges not in these three cases alone but in any case they choose from my birth to this day."

This letter is more than sufficient to prove that the allegations made about his character were not only baseless but false and deliberate attempts to defame and destroy his image in the public.

In regard to Shahu's mission of uplifting the masses and down trodden people, there were accusations by the Brahminical leaders as well as the Brahmin world that 1) the Maharaja was creating caste jealousy granting posts to non-Brahmins 2) that he was against self-Government and 3) struggle for freedom etc. and he himself had replied all charges. Let us have information about these in the words of Maharaja himself -

"Crows can see only the wounds. In like manner these obscurants only see that may be called the cost of progress. I am criticised for giving Sanads to some befitting members of



the untouchable communities to practice as Vakils. Some classes in India have inherited the notion that such occupations as the medical or legal etc. are their exclusive preserve. There is no dispute as to the principle that there should be right man in the right place. But the principle must need be modified to suit changes in the times. Even the British Government in earlier times for the sake of giving political education offered to persons of lesser qualification the post of Collector or Judge. Even diplomas to practice were given without examination to persons possessing general knowledge. Even today we find in British India, Attorneys, persons who have not passed regular examination even though the number of such as have passed is by no means scanty. If the diplomas which I gave to the untouchables, had been given to Brahmins, Kayasthas or Saraswatas it would have provoked no comment."<sup>23</sup>

Once the late Ganpatrao Abhyankar Vakil, an eminent pleader of Sangli pointed out to the Maharaja that "Maharaja it is not good to grant scholarships on the basis of caste. Only on merit scholarships and services should be given." Without replying on the spot, Shahu Maharaja took Abhyankar to his royal stable, at the time when Chandi<sup>24</sup> was to be feed to horses. That day, the Maharaja threw-spread up on one large cotton mat the fodder-grams and freed all the horses to eat them. Suddenly, the strong, sharp and active horses ran to the spot to eat

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23. BCB., - Cp.cit., P.64

24. Chandi is a word usually used in Marathi for staple food grain of horse and is meant here - grams.

hurriedly, and finished immediately the whole fodder without permitting the old, lame, weak and diseased horses to eat. All of these could not <sup>race</sup> the strong and active horses in eating the fodder. They remained therefore with empty stomachs. To see that Abhyankar also felt sad as strong horses could not keep anything to eat for weak or likewise horses. The Maharaja thereupon commended -

" You see Mr. Abhyankar, only the strong and active horses ate grams and those who actually needed and were hungry could get no chance to eat. They remained far behind, because of the fear of bites and beats of the strong horses. In such cases, ~~th~~ they are to be fed by Tobara<sup>25</sup> only. If it is not done in the manner, they will starve to die. Let me know, then, why should not extra concession be given to those who are lacking behind?"<sup>26</sup>

Such a deep understanding of the social problem was acquired by the Maharaja and he practised all ways and means available to him to lead the society to progress and prosperity. To help the weak is not a new principle. We generally observe the same at our respective homes when there is a younger or youngest member in the house. Greatness of the Maharaja is this that he had brought this principle in private life on the stage of the nation and political platform.

Now about a charge of creating caste jealousy among the non-Brahmins against the Brahmins, he had replied -

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25. Tobara means a mouth bag of horse wherein grams are kept as his fodder.

26. Bagal, Madhavrao, - Shri Shahu Maharaj Yanchya Athwani, P.34

" I am often accused of formenting caste jealousy under the pretext of breaking the caste system. This is baseless accusation. While charging **any** opponents, I do not entrench myself in pride of my caste, neither in the revered name of Shivaji Maratha or in the sacred precincts of religion. On the other hand such as entrench themselves in this way are to me contemptible. My only fault is that to such as have fallen out or rather thrown out from the common march of progress. I hold with love equal to what I bear to myself or to my community and lead them on their proper place in society with as much effort, as I can make." He clarified further his stand more specifically that "I do this because my conscience dictate it to me as my duty. If the depressed are not elevated in time, I am afraid they will be crushed under the grinding stone of castes. Does it not therefore follow that to support the depressed castes is not the same as encouraging enmity among castes ?"<sup>27</sup>

"It would be the happiest day of my life when we shall cease to reckon men low because of their birth". Then explaining the necessity of casteless society and nationalism in India he asked the people "to dethrone the Brahmins in order to enthrone the Indian nation."<sup>28</sup>

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27 . BCB., Op.Cit., P.44

28 . Ibid., : P.45.

Challenging then the unnecessary and cruel criticism of the Brahmins he declared -

"If the Brahmins choose to beat me in return for the love I bear them, it would be treachery to myself and to my cause not to pay them in their own coins."<sup>29</sup> This was how, Shahu Maharaja had to attack the Brahminical tendencies very severely and as a counter reaction to it, the famous Brahmin versus Non-Brahmin feud was started in Maharashtra. So far, Shahu himself was concerned, we found him scolding the Marathas also for their caste pride. In a public meeting of the Marathas he had publicly told at Nasik that -

"To dissolve caste is a necessity. To uphold them is a sin.-- Hold your caste meetings but ignore not the point that they are only a means to an end. The end of our caste meeting is to end the castes."<sup>30</sup>

One more accusation levelled against him was that he was against the self-Government and was a tool in the hands of the British. This was also a false charge and he had himself answered as -

"Another accusation levelled against me by some newspapers is that I am absolutely against giving any self-government to my subjects. This is again a pure myth. In the speech on which this accusation is based, "I said, "But if I may be allowed to express an opinion at this stage, I would only say that I for one would hesitate to make any constitutional changes in the direction of

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29. Ibid'

30. Ibid., P.43

the Reforms until the general level of education among the masses has risen and is at least partially equalised with that of the higher classes" This does not lend" he firmly told out "any support to the accusation that I am opposed to giving self Government to the people. What I said was that I could not look upon the devolution of political power as safe before the voters of all the castes, were educated enough to understand their civil rights."<sup>31</sup>

While stressing the point of diffusing education to the masses he said in the same meeting that -

"You will no doubt understand that my efforts after education are motivated solely because I am most anxious to give self-Government as early as possible to my subjects".

So far the Home Rule or Self-Government movement was concerned he was optimistic. He wanted freedom and self-Government. On what point he differed was the subject "whether political reform should precede social reform".<sup>32</sup> His humble opinion was this that these two kinds of reforms were not separate from one another and both were necessary to start with simultaneously as two wheels of a carriage. One can easily, now understand the truth in his saying and blame cannot be given to him after realising the caste strifes, and hatred between castes and castes in the present time.

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31. Ibid., P.48

32. Ibid., P.51

Similarly his views on Swarajya<sup>33</sup> or complete freedom to India were encouraging for creating atmosphere to suit the struggle for freedom. But, because of unhealthy social conditions, ignorance and poverty of the masses he feared for the return of "the Peshwa's rule".<sup>34</sup> There may be difference of opinion, but his desire of having freedom for our country, cannot be denied. As earlier mentioned, the amounts of monetary help sent by him to Aurobindo and others, crown him as a Patriot Prince and wash out the idea that he was a pro-British or against the freedom movement. What it mattered with his relations to freedom fighters was not the lack of love about them, but the double role of some Brahmin extremists who used to disclose his help and relations with the freedom fighters to the British to bring him into trap. Pundalikaji Katgade, in the course of writing the biography of the late Govindrao Yalagi, a freedom fighter from Belgaum had unknowingly revealed the truth. According to him, the "Shivaji Club" in Kolhapur was activated against the British on the encouragement that Shahu Maharaja had given to it."<sup>35</sup> In fact, as Katagade wrote, Shahu Maharaja was held by all patriots and extremist freedom revolutionaries as their man and helper.<sup>36</sup>

Secondly, as being the King he was unable to participate directly in the freedom struggle, but showed his willingness to continue that fight against the British by way of sending money to Newspaper, patriots and some organizations like the Shivaji

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33. Jadhao, B.B. - Op.cit., P.3

34. BCB., - Op.Cit., P.50

35. Katagade, Pundalikji - Kai.Govindrao Yalagi, P.85

36. Ibid., pp.85-86.

Club. But it was his tragedy that his Brahmin opponents used to report his secret help to the British.<sup>37</sup> The British were, therefore, very vigilant about the activities of Shahu and whenever complaints were received by them through their sources or Vernacular Press like *Rashtramat* or *Kesari*, they used to scold him. While describing the threats of the British Government to a British diplomat he wrote that under such threats he would resign the Crownship rather than follow the orders of the British for remaining inactive.<sup>38</sup> Similarly in a speech he had warned his Brahmin opponents telling them that "I do what I believe. Love or resentment matters me not".<sup>39</sup>

It is true that Shahu had not directly joined the movement against the British and he had maintained allegiance to the British. But it was his role of a King, not as a citizen or commoner. As a commoner he loved the idea of freedom and demanded it also openly. However it was not the Maharaja alone who declared his loyalty to the British. Loknanya Tilak had also declared his loyalty to the British in 1914. After his release from the Mandalay Jail in Burma, Tilak was called on for discussions with the Poona Collector. Thereafter on 27th Aug. '14,

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37. In 1920, it was published in the '*Rashtramat*' that Shri Shahu Maharaj had sent Rs.3000/- to patriots. Naturally the British were to call explanation from him. Immediately he declared, to avoid explanation<sup>or</sup> from the British, in that regard as "it is a pure invention". See, *BCB*, - *Op.Cit.* P.57.

38. Thakare K.S. (Prabodhankar), - *Pratapsimha Chhatrapati ani Rango Bapuji*, Introduction, P.6.

39. *BCB*, - *Op.cit.*, P.58.

he issued a public hand bill declaring his loyalty to the British.<sup>40</sup>

The statement of Lokmanya Tilak or criticism against Shahu by a section of vernacular press and some intellectual Brahmins, are not to be taken into account from its open meaning. The circumstances were such in those days, that the father of the extremist movement had also to declare his allegiance, not to oppose the freedom struggle but to carry on his mission through troubled waters. This was also true in case of Shahu Maharaja. The principle which is applied to Lokmanya Tilak must be applied to Shahu Maharaja. And whatever was said or written including a booklet edited by S.A.Dange, the "Swarajyadrohi Chhatrapati"<sup>41</sup> cannot be accepted as a correct approach to know Shahu Chhatrapati.

In general, thus, from all the speeches and actions of him it is evident that the Maharaja was not against the freedom or self Government and struggle for it. If Brahmin leaders of his time would have removed the fear from the non-Brahmin's mind about the revival of Brahminical Influence, or if there would have been any other group other than the Brahmins to lead the freedom struggle, the picture might have been quite different.

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40. "Alike the manner of those who harness political movement, on some issues, mostly in regard to the internal administration, there are special differences between the Government and I. But it did not mean that my attitude or actions express hatred about the Government. To hold such views would not be wise. My intention or desire was never of that nature. I tell once and for ever that like the Irish peoples Home Rule Party in Ireland we are making efforts to bring reforms in the system of Government and not to destroy it.- See Katagade, Pundalikaji, - Kai Govindrao Yalagi, P.223.

41. Dange, S.A., Swarajyadrohi Chhatrapati, 1921



Even then his following words will remind that he was for freedom -

" Our endeavours are motivated by our desire to stand independently without support. Therefore, do not misunderstand us ".<sup>42</sup>

#### SHAHU IN HIS OWN WORDS

Regarding his leadership (either of the masses or of non-Brahmins), his aim and his achievements, Shahu Chhatrapati has to say this :

" I am not a leader of any community nor I desire to be such. On the other hand I dissuade those who follow me on the false belief that I am their leader. "<sup>43</sup>

"My thoughts and my acts represent nobody but myself and it is my hope that my relations or my friends should not imitate me without a proper consideration of the pros and cons. "<sup>44</sup>

About his association with the Satya Shodhak Samaj and Arya Samaj, he ~~x~~ had once told -

" I am not a Satya Shodhak. Nor am I connected with the League. "<sup>45</sup> This is true, but if you tell me tomorrow to give up my friendship with P.C.Patil<sup>46</sup> or Shripatrao Shinde<sup>47</sup> whom

42. BCB. - Op.cit., 48

43. Ibid., Op.cit., P.59

44. Ibid., PP.59-60.

45. Here "the League" means the "All India Maratha League".

46. The late Dr.P.C.Patil, was the first student of the Maratha Boarding Kolhapur, first Maratha Matriculate in the Kolhapur State and the first Indian Principal of the Poona Agricultural College, Poona.

47. Pl. see on p. 416.

I have brought up like children or that I should abandon my wife because (her brother) Babasaheb Khanvilkar is a Satya Shodhak or that I should forget my fraternal relationship with Bapusaheb, his wife and brother-in-law (the Parmekars) as they are Satya Samajists, what shall I do ?"<sup>48</sup>

Thus he was a civilised man and wanted to maintain all humanly relations with other men although their opinions were different ~~or~~ were not acceptable to him.

In private life also he was very pious and once mentioned that -

" I never take beef or wines. -- I shall never give up friendly and allied communities -- I am made to suffer for plain speaking and I am ready to suffer for it."<sup>49</sup>

Further, he told in connection with the Brahmin non-Brahmin strife that -

" I must confess that though a Maratha, I was not fully aware of the strained relations between the Marathas and the allied castes and the Brahmins."<sup>50</sup>

47. The late Shripatrao Shinde was the founder and editor of the famous non-Brahmin News paper - 'Vijayi Maratha' in Poona. The paper during his time was called the 'Kesari' of the Brahmanetar Party, and Shahu Maharaja had helped him for his education like P.C. Patil and others. See, Shinde, M.S., Op.cit. P.73.

48. Latthe, A.B., Op.cit. Vol. II, P.588.

49. Ibid., P. 539.

50. Ibid., P. 589.

CRITICS AND UPHOLDERS

It was the tragedy of times that during Shahu's period few were there among the non-Brahmins for whom he had worked to know his mission and show if there were some pitfalls. The Brahmins, although were wise enough to analyse and grasp his movement, did not come out of their traditional outlook to do the duty of a healthy critic and ever expressed only their anti-Shahu views. Criticism to show pitfalls is admissible and the one made only for the sake of criticism is detrimental. From the national and social point of view even in those days a healthy criticism was required to evaluate the work of Shahu Maharaj. However for that, the non Brahmins were not capable on account of the fact, that they were becoming educated only recently and they had no mature philosophers, thinkers, politicians and even critics among them. It was in fact, traditionally believed that other than the Brahmins cannot learn because intellect brain is the gift of heaven and unless man is born in the house of a Brahmin, no one can learn and acquire knowledge. Nay, it was supposed that "learning was the most difficult task and it was not the job of non-Brahmins."

Against this situation, Shahu's work was not properly evaluated in his time or even after that. He was criticised very badly by the Brahmins or intellectual class is partially true. Whatever criticism levelled against him was not for his complete career or whole mission, but to that portion only which directly

or indirectly either injured or insulted the traditional prestige of the Brahmins. No thesis of a criticism on him is found. Only scattered thoughts and that too related specially to non-Brahmin movement are traceable in some news papers like the Kesari, Poona; Rashtramat, Bombay; Granthmala and Samarth of Kolhapur and others. And the critics were mainly politicians like Lokmanya Tilak, V.G.Vijapurkar, M.C.Kelkar, Sitaram Damale<sup>51</sup> and others. All of them were conservative Brahmins and thus opponents of new reforms. They had criticised Shahu Maharaja for his reforms only. They had not spared even Brahmin reformers like Gopal Ganesh Agarkar and Justice Ranade for their social revolutionary ideas.

It has been presumed that Lokmanya Tilak had severely criticised Shahu as both of them had held different views in the Tai Maharaj case, the Shivaji Club, the Vedokta affair, the Rajopadhye Inam case, the Shankaracharya Math, Satya Shodhak Samaj, Arya Samaj, Brahmanetar or non-Brahmin movement and many other social and political issues of their times. But directly it is not traceable to show that Lokmanya Tilak had attacked the Maharaja. Even it was so, it cannot be held that both of them were internally keeping good relations. A letter of 7/8th July 1920 written by Shahu Chhatrapati to Col. Wodehouse on receiving information from Tophkhane brings to light that although both of them had maintained public morality of not abusing directly against one another, internally at least Lokmanya Tilak was not

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51. Mr. Sitaram Damale was the editor of "Rashtramat" daily.

happy with Shahu's work and activities. The letter clearly reveals that truth when Shahu writes -

"Sometime back when Tilak was staying at his favourite fort, one Prof. Tophkhane<sup>52</sup> had been there and had a talk with Tilak. In his talk, Tilak said to him that if vilification and agitation don't prevent His Highness from following his policy of flattering the Europeans and in his speeches encouraging the non-Brahmins to improve their status etc., and creating the illfeeling between the Brahmins and the non-Brahmins then let him be assured that he will have the fate of Jackson and Rand in our presidency."<sup>53</sup>

This is how the war was going on between Shahu and Tilak. It is quite clear from the above letter, that all sorts of efforts were made by Tilak and his followers, even by warning of death to dissuade Shahu from the non-Brahmin movement or his cause of social upliftment. However such warning of death cannot be taken in real or poisonous sense because there was positive difference between Jackson and Shahu.

Basically there was no reason for feud between Shahu and Tilak. What Tilak did not like of Shahu were his (Shahu's) social and religious reforms and enactments. On the eve of the Vedokta Affair also even after supporting the Kolhapur Brahmins as earlier pointed out Tilak had adopted rather mild attitude.

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52. The late V.D. Tophkhane was a trustworthy friend to both Lokmanya Tilak and Shahu Chhatrapati.

53. KAO, SDR., No.R.12074, dated 7/8 July, 1920.

His following statement proves the same -

" It is sheer indiscipline to destroy peace without reason on the part of those whose caste origin is not great than Shri Shivaji Maharaja".<sup>54</sup>

Further he had opined as N.C.Kelkar had told that "To what degree religious rights are to be granted to a caste is not the real issue in the Vedokta dispute, but how far a King belonging to a particular caste, should interfere, for the pride of his caste fellows in the religious and social tradition, is the only problem".<sup>55</sup> Thus Tilak had very much limited concern to Shahu's activities and no comment of him is found on the whole career of Shahu Maharaja. This might have been due to the fact also, that he died earlier than the Maharaja.

N.C.Kelkar, a great disciple of Lokmanya had expressed no different opinions than his leader. In an editorial in Kesari of 30th September 1913 on "Kulkarni Lilamrit"<sup>56</sup> he had criticised the Maharaja for helping non-Brahmin movement. And on 7th October 1913, he had very clearly appealed to the Bombay Government to prevent Shahu from his activities of helping the non-Brahmins.<sup>57</sup>

54. Kesari - 22nd October 1901.

55. Kelkar, N.C., - Lokmanya Tilak (Biography) Vol., P.11.

56. "Kulkarni Lilamrit" was a thesis written by the late Mukundrao Patil of Ahmednagar on the heinous affairs of the Kulkarnis or Talathis and was published in 1913.

57. Kelkar, N.C., Samagra Kelkar Vangmaya Vol.IV, Political, P. 368.

Criticism even of V.K.Rajwade, the great historian of Maharashtra, was partial and related with religious aspect only. As has been quoted by G.D.Khanolkar the author of the "Prof.V.G. Vijapurkar" and <sup>as</sup>commonly held by all the Brahmins Rajwade had no different views but only expressed -

"It is not difficult to depict that what would be in the coming five to ten years of this (non-Brahmin) irregular movement if it would come out of Karveer State and over Maharashtra. If this movement is neglected and not prevented in time, without reason there would be created two groups - the Shishyapaksha and Gurupaksha or the group of disciples and the teachers - throughout the country." <sup>58</sup>

After all, the opinions of Lokmanya Tilak or V.K.Rajwade and other Brahmin intellectuals of those days were mostly religious and not rational. It was the impact of the time on them and they had no vision of future social change in India. Their criticism therefore, cannot be held as a part of evaluation of Shahu's life and career.

The second group, who uphold the views of Shahu and thought of revolutionary social change in India belonged to the followers or like minded of Shahu Maharaja. Among them were, his son and successor, Shri Rajaram Chhatrapati Maharaja, Sir S.M. Fraser, Bhaskarrao Jadhav, Vitthal Ramji Shinde, Sayajirao Gaikwad Maharaj and many others like B.R.Ambedkar who in his

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58. Khanolkar, G.D., - Prof.V.G.Vijapurkar, P.29.

later life became the architect of Free India's Constitution. In the present time, there is no necessity of making distinction between the Brahmin and non-Brahmin critics or thinkers. The old phase of that tone is disappeared and almost all thinkers, critics and politicians agree to uphold Shahu unanimously as the benefactor of the masses and as a social revolutionary in modern times.

Shri Sayajirao Gaikwad, the Maharaja of Baroda, who himself was the patron of reforms, had rightly remarked on the educational work of Shahu Maharaja as --

" I hear that the views of various castes in Kolhapur are against each other, when society tries to seek progress, it faces a transitory period and such events take place. Those who are remained backward must be helped by others to bring them forward. What educational concessions have been granted to them by the Maharaja (Shahu) are not to injure others."<sup>59</sup>

Laxmibaisaheb, the wife of Shahu and Chhatrapati Rajaram Maharaj, his son, were true followers of him and had uphold the views of Shahu as their own. Even at the last rites of the dead body of Shahu Maharaja both of them followed not the traditional way in the Palace but followed the way, the Maharaja had told. Accordingly, instead of Brahmin priest, the Satya Shodhak priests were employed at the last rites of the Maharaja. And the Satya Shodhak non-Brahmin priests performed the last prayers at the pyre.<sup>60</sup>

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59. Marathi Shala Patrak Vol.XX, Issue No.5, May,1909.

60. Shirke,D.M., - Op.Cit., PP.63,68 and 102.



While presiding over the Depressed Classes Conference at Karveer on 16th October 1922 and Brahmanetar Parishad at Satara on 18th December, 1922, so also while addressing the Kolhapur Municipality, Rajaram Maharaja<sup>61</sup> highly upheld the views of Shahu Maharaja and told that the Brahmanetar movement was not created to hate others but to make people aware to respect man not by his birth but merit.

Sir S.M.Fraser, his teacher had very ably reviewed the life of Shahu as :

"It would be absurdly unjust, however, to believe that he fought the Brahmins for the pleasure of fighting or that he did not feel very acutely indeed the mud-throwing of which he and his family were for years the target. Never hesitating to admit what he owed to liberal minded Brahmins, like Mr.Ranade, Mr.Agarkar and Mr.Gokhale, he retained friends among their ranks throughout. In a word, he opposed Brahmins as a system, not so much from hatred of the Brahmins as because he loved the non-Brahmin masses and because he was that type of ~~man~~-uncommon in any country - whom the sight of injustice stirred, not merely to intellectual disapproval but to a heartfell ardour to strike a blow and remedy the wrong."<sup>62</sup>

A.B.Latthe, the first biographer of Shahu told in 1928 that Shahu's work was more complementary from various sides to

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61. Ibid., P.105.

62. Latthe, A.B. - Op.cit.I.Preface P.XII.

our nation's progress than those who criticised him as a traitor of the freedom movement and of the nations."<sup>63</sup>

Bhaskarrao Jadhao, a staunch Satya Shodhak and an alumny of Shahu's Darbar stated that -

" The Maharaja had thoroughly knew that inequality in the Hinduism is the greatest difficulty in seeking all-round progress of India and what high degree efforts he had made (to achieve progress of India) and success achieved in that regard were never credited to any one."<sup>64</sup>

Vitthal Ramaji Shinde a contemporary and social revolutionary had summed up the career of the Maharaja as --

" Shahu was not simply Maratha, non-Brahmin; he was all-round a great man of a nation in the new age."<sup>65</sup>

And in one of his letters dated 4th September, 1921, B.R. Ambedkar had correctly evaluated the work of Shahu Maharaja when he wrote --

" We need you ever so much for you are the father of that great movement towards social democracy which is making its headway in India."<sup>66</sup>

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63. Patil, Balasaheb, (Edr.) Satyawadi, S.S. Issue 1974 P.32.

64. Ibid., P.33

65. Ibid., P.44

66. KAO, SDR., No.13420 dated 4th Sept.1921.

It is sufficient enough to prove from the above mentioned words that Shahu Chhatrapati of Kolhapur behaved as a true and sincere friend of humanity at every moment while carrying on his role or duties as well as voluntary work of social upliftment. And his heart was pure and ever fresh to admit the truth and serve the humanity.

In the present time almost all the thinkers, critics and intellectuals in Maharashtra have rightly and greatly appreciated the social work and social thoughts of Shahu Maharaja. The disputes or controversies over his work and life are mostly disappearing now and, soon will clear the whole sky to welcome him as a Social Revolutionary.

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" REPORT ON THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE KOLHAPUR STATE "

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2 CENSUS REPORT OF 1901, - KOLHAPUR AND SOUTHERN MARATHA  
COUNTRY STATES BY BHASKARRAO JADHAO

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a) Section - Rajarshi Shahu Daptar (Hujur Khajagi Daptar)

Period : A.D. 1801 to 1923. Rumal Nos.1 to 50

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CRONOLOGY OF THE LIFE CAREER OF

SHAHU CHHATRAPATI

- 1874 July, 26 : Born at Kolhapur, 'Laxmi Vilas Palace'  
( Present Circuit House )
- 1884 March, 17 : Aoption ceremony.
- 1886 March, 20 : Death of Abasaheb Ghatge, Father and  
Regent of the Kolhapur State.
- 1885 to 1889 : Education at the ~~Ka~~ Rajkumar College,  
Rajkot.
- 1888 May, 3 : The construction of the Kolhapur State  
Railway commenced at the hands of  
Chh.Shahu.
- 1889 to 1893 : Study under the tutorship of Mr.S.M.  
Fraser at Dharwar.
- 1891 April, 1 : Married to Laxmibai, the daughter of  
Gunjajirao Khanvilakr of Baroda.
- 1891 Nov. 5 : On tour to Southern India and Ceylon.
- 1892 Oct. : On tour to Sindh, Punjab and Delhi.
- 1894 April, 2 : Installation.
- April, 14 : Huzur Order: According to this order no  
officer from the Kolhapur State would accept  
any thing ~~from~~ free ~~from~~ of charge from the  
Citizens while on touring.
- 1895 March, 28 : Opening of the New Building of the Fergusson  
College at Poona.
- 1896 Nove., 24 : Wathukum: Sarsubhe: Prohibites all Vatandar  
from mortgaging the Vatani Jamini for  
obtaining loans etc.
- 1896 Nov. 24 : Started Famine relief works, granted subsidies  
to farmers and opened low-priced Food-grain  
shops for Famine affected.



- 1896 Nov. 29 : Wathukum relating to the use of Govt. tank water for irrigation etc.
- 1898 to 1901 Tai Maharaj Case.
- 1900 to 1905 : Vedokta Dispute and publication of "Sidhanta Vijay".
- 1902 May thro. : On tour to Europe  
Augs.
- 1901 to 1911 : Establishment of Separate Boarding Houses for various communities.
- 1901 : Cow Haunting Prohibition Act.
- 1902 July, 26 : Declaration of reservation of 50% seats for backward class communities in employment.
- 1906 Sept. : Establishment of Chh. Shahu Spinning Mills at Kolhapur in co-operative sector.
- 1909 : Beginning of the construction of Laxmi Dam at Radhanagari.
- 1911 - 1912 : Passing of Co-operative Act  
Declaration of free and compulsory Primary Education.  
Vedokta Shrivani at the hands of Maratha.
- 1913 : ~~Dem~~arked grants to 'Satyashodhak School'  
Establishment of 'Patil School' to train the Patils- the Village officers. Issue of an order imposing the unity of Inams, and that the Inams not to be mortgaged.  
Passing of Co-operative Societies Act.
- 1917 June, 10 : Dr. Kurtkoti's appointment as 'Shankaracharya Peeth' of Kolhapur.
- 1917 July : Remarriage (of widow) Act passed.
- 1917 Dec. 27 : President of Eleventh Maratha Educational Conference at Khamgaon.
- 1918 Feb. 23 : Enforcement of 'Talathi system' and abolition of 'Kulkarni Vatan'.  
Intercaste marriage Act passed.

- 1918 March 3 : 'Balute system' was stopped.  
: Passing of State Education Cess Act.
- 1918 June, 25 : 'Maharki system' was stopped.
- ~~August 21~~  
Sept. 15 : Dr.Kurtkotl resigned the Shankarachrya Peeth.
- Nov. 10 : Addressed Workers Conference Bombay
- Dec. 14 : President of Arya Dharma Conference at Navsari.
- 1919 ~~Dec~~ April 19 to 21 : President of the Thirteenth Conference of Kshatriyas at ~~Kat~~ Kanpur, Award of the title 'Rajarshee'.  
: Huzur Order: Removes untouchability from Hospitals and other public places etc.
- 1919 July, thro' Nov. : Huzur order: abolishes caste system from schools etc.  
: Kolhapur State Marriage Act between Hindus and Jains.
- 1920 March, 20 : Addressed a Conference of Depressed classes at Mangaon.
- April, 15 : Laid Foundation stone of Shri Udaji Maratha students Boarding at Nasik.
- May, 30 : Presidential Address at the all India Depressed classes Conference at Nagpur.
- July, 6 : Establishment of 'Shivaji Kshatriy Vaidik School'.  
July, 27 : President of 'Karnatak Social Conference' at Hubali.
- 1921 Jan. : Establishment of 'Kshatrajagadaguru Peeth' at Kolhapur.
- Nov. 19 : Laying Foundation Stone of Shivaji Memorial, Poona.
- 1922 Feb.16 : President of All India Depressed classes conference at New Delhi.
- 1922 May, 6 : Died at Panhala Lodge, Bombay.